POLYHEDRON

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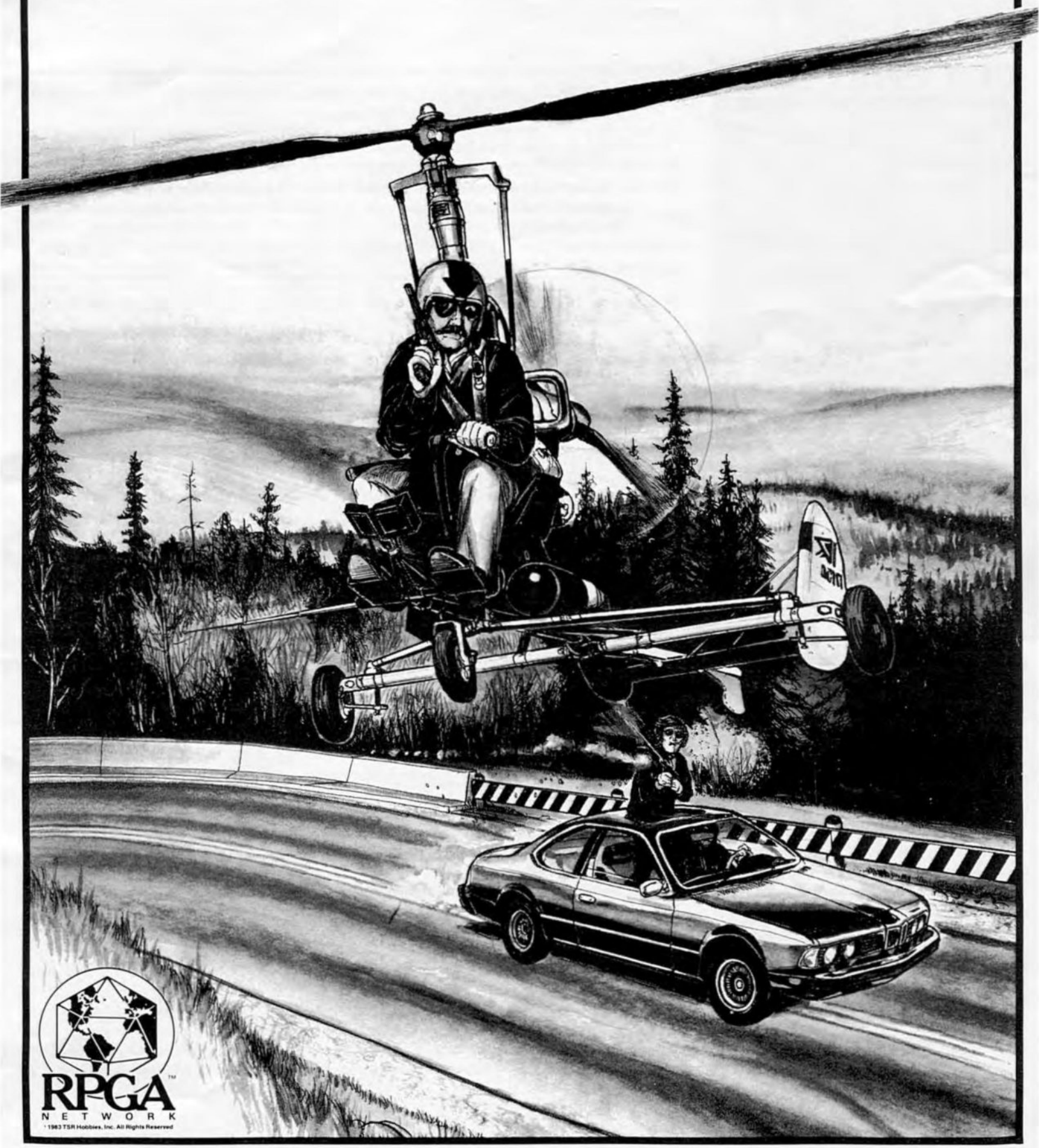

RPGA™ NETWORK

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POLYHEDRON™

Newszine
Volume 4, Number 1
Issue #16

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. . . from the editor

Many of you may remember back to when the subject of putting mini-modules in POLYHEDRON™ Newszine came up in the *Letters* section (issue #10). I quote myself: "Quite simply, we haven't the room in a 32-page newszine." At the risk of sounding like I'm contradicting myself, I'm pleased to present the first POLYHEDRON Newszine mini-module, *The Riddle of Dolmen Moor,* Scenario 5 in the epic *Propecy of Brie* series. The mini-module inclusion was made possible by a few interesting turn of events — almost like a line of toppling dominoes.

The Powers that Be decided to stop producing exclusive RPGA Network merchandise, and consequently, the RPGA line of modules. That eliminated the need for the *Treasure Chest* section, which opened Grade A #1 prime space in the newszine. At the same time, the Acquisitions department at TSR was working on producing the RPGA module line, and when the decision was made, they were left with almost-publishable modules which hadn't been scheduled for TSR module production. RPGA HQ decided that including mini-modules would kill three birds with one stone: we'd be able to finish the *Prophecy of Brie* series; we'd be utilizing prime space with good copy; and we will be able to give mini-modules to those members who have asked for them.

Mini-modules will be included on a semi-regular basis, depending on the availability of good modules (putting together even a good mini-module is a complicated and time-consuming endeavor). Let me know what you think about the whole thing.

As for the rest of this issue, you may have noticed that the Departments have been kept to a minimum to give you more space for gaming articles. Member Doug Behringer provided us with this issue's TOP SECRET® game *Encounters*, complete with a defecting laser scientist, a couple of determined Soviet GRU agents, and an even more determined NATO agent, Dean Wiles.

Gamma Master Jim Ward has started a new continuing feature called *Cryptic Alliance of the Bi-month*, which details (what else?) the GAMMA WORLD® game Cryptic Alliances. Similarly, Carl Smith bites off a chunk of the new D&D® gaming accessory, *The Shady Dragon Inn*, and expands on the main tavern and the workers of said establishment.

Roger Moore is back with another *Notes for the Dungeon Master: Hot Shots and Cold Water.* Whether you're a player or DM, if you have problem players in your campaign, this article is for you.

Kim Eastland has also provided a three-section article on how to prevent boredom from ruining your game campaign. The first section, appropriately titled *Boredom*, provides a checklist of conditions that can make a campaign a real "yawner." Section two, *Research is not a dirty word* is a bibliography of sorts designed to simplify and make researching information for campaigns enjoyable. The last section is a spread of NASA photos which demonstrates how to turn things you can encounter every day into exciting adventures.

If you've ever wondered where the term "Monty Haul" came from, read Jim Ward's *Monty Haul and the German High Command*, reprinted from DRAGON® Magazine #15.

On a different note, I'd like to take the opportunity to mention some future RPGA Network plans. RPGA HQ is in the process of working up plans to find and appoint six to eight RPGA Network members as Regional Directors to represent RPGA HQ by encouraging and advising members on how to run their own RPGA-sanctioned conventions. Rough plans include dividing the areas of responsibility by geographic location, and appointing a member (by application and interview) from that particular area. We'd like to see more of you running your own conventions, with our help and advice, of course. I won't go into any more detail at this point, because we're still in the process of planning, but look for an application and more complete explanation in the next issue of POLYHEDRON Newszine. In the meantime, think about whether the concept interests you or not, but DO NOT, I repeat DO NOT write to ask us for more information or an application beforehand. We'll tell you as soon as it's developed, and writing ahead of time WILL NOT increase your chances of becoming a director.

On a final note, I'd like to appeal to all of you who fancy yourselves "writers." I've always welcomed receiving "good" articles from members, but at this point I'd like to encourage more members to submit articles for publication in POLYHEDRON™ Newszine. The RPGA Network needs more communication between its members, and since POLYHEDRON Newszine is the medium through which the members are supposed to communicate, perhaps it's time we started doing more of it here.

Without going into greater detail about what I'd like to see here (see the *Letters* section in POLYHEDRON Newszine #15), I'm asking that anyone who wants to submit material for publication in POLYHEDRON Newszine write to me first requesting a copy of DRAGON® Magazine's Writer's Guidelines (include a SASE, please), a generic, but comprehensive "how-to" leaflet. This guide is a must for the novice, unpublished, or just plain young writer. It tells you how to package your article so that it has a better chance of being accepted for publication, and can prevent you from making embarrassing mistakes.

On a more practical level, POLYHEDRON Newszine's new payment system for accepted articles comes in the form of increasing the author's membership by an amount dependent on the quality and length of the accepted article. I hope to see some of your work in the near future!

Hey you in Los Angeles!

Member Dov Freedman is starting an RPGA Network club and wants members from the Beverly/Fairfax area. Write to him at 458 North Fuller, Los Angeles, CA 90036, or call him between 7:00 and 11:00 at (213) 935-8996.

Encounters

by Doug Behringer

The scenario

You look over the hood, through the steam pouring from your engine, and finally concede that the car has had it. The last round the GRU agents in the fleeing BMW pumped into the radiator was all it took, and now they're racing for the East German border with the defector you're supposed to be guarding. Damn security leaks!

You reach into the glove compartment, snatching out a map, and estimate the distance to the border to be approximately 75 miles by road, or 40 miles as the crow flies. Throwing open the trunk, you sigh, dreading what you must do next. Although certified in the use of gyrocopters, you hate the thought of taking off in this fragile-looking thing of aluminum and wire. You set about the task of assembling the gyrocopter, and, moving as quickly as possible, you snap the last piece into place after about a half hour — there should be just enough time to beat them yet. You grab a pair of binoculars, and gingerly place your bulk in the tiny gyrocopter cockpit, sighing with relief when the engine leaps to life.

Wasting no more time, you head east in the direction of the BMW. You follow the treeline to hide your position as best as possible, searching the rolling West German landscape. Luck seems to be on your side after all, you decide, when you spot the BMW along the roadside. The right rear tire seems to be flat. One of your rounds must have found its target. You quickly flip the button marked "quiet" to silence the gryrocopter's engine, and move toward a row of trees about 500 feet from the car to hide while you observe the scene below.

Using your binoculars, you see that one of the GRU agents is changing the tire, while the other stands guard. East German laser scientist, Scott Mohr, is slumped in the backseat, and you can't tell whether the defector is dead or alive. The Soviets have been watching him for months after hearing reports of growing unrest among he and his co-workers. A security leak caused them to discover the plans of his defection.

You must act soon. The border is just a few miles down the road, and if they get across that, you have lost.

The characters

Dean Wiles
NATO agent
Code name: Spider
Physical Strength: 81
Charm: 92
Willpower: 72
Courage: 95
Knowledge: 56
Coordination: 93
Offense: 94
Deception: 94
Evasion: 93
Deactivation: 75
Movement Value: 246
Life Level: 15
Hand-to-Hand Combat Value: 174
Surprise Value: 187
Height: 5′9″
Weight: 145
Age 28, Male
American, right-handed
Assassination Bureau
Weapon: 9mm Luger self-load (German)
PWV: 47
PB: 0
S: -55
M: -145
L: X
WS: VF
Rate: 1
Ammo.: 8
Deception: -4
HWV: 4
Base speed: 104
Base accuracy: 141
Range: 0/-55/-145/X

Dean Wiles is an agent ready to lay his life on the line to get back the East German laser scientist who is trying to defect to the West, but currently held captive by the Soviet agents. Again, a security leak allowed the enemy agents to snatch the man away. Wiles must assume that the agent is still alive; it is his duty to get the scientist back at all costs.

Mik Duplie
GRU agent
Code name: Duke, the driver
Physical Strength: 35
Charm: 19
Willpower: 95
Courage: 44
Knowledge: 69
Coordination: 65
Life Level: 13
Weapon: 9mm PPK(h) (7 dum dums)
Base speed: 45%
Base accuracy: 82%
Range: 0/-45/-145

Gregor Campleliski
GRU agent
Code name: Cheeseball
Physical Strength: 32
Charm: 72
Willpower: 52
Courage: 29
Knowledge: 83
Coordination: 25
Life Level: 8
Weapon: Beretta 93R (9mm) USA
PWV: 56
PB: +1
S: -26
M: -76
L: -216
WS: F
Rate: 3 (9)
Ammo.: 20
Deception: -4
HWV: 8
Base speed: 32
Base accuracy: 83
Range: +1/-26/-76/-216

The job of the GRU agents is to transport the East German scientist over the border at all costs. The scientist is far too valuable for them to harm under any circumstances. They will repair the tire in 15 minutes from the time Agent Wiles spots them, and the car will resume its race for the border at high speed.

Administrator's briefing

Agent Wiles has many options to get the scientist safely away from the enemy agents. He may open fire from his current position in the gyrocopter (-30% off of Accuracy from any range while airborne), 500 feet being medium range, but it wouldn't be wise at this distance since he is rather low on ammunition.

He may wish to move closer (within 100 feet), land the gyrocopter (which only takes a matter of seconds), and launch an assault from the ground. The Soviet agents have a 60% chance of noticing someone moving towards them from the ground. The BMW is bulletproof, so the enemy will use the car for cover. If one of the agents is killed, there is a 20% chance per round that the remaining agent will surrender and ask for political asylum.

It is also possible that Wiles may choose to sneak up on the vehicle by creating some kind of diversion. The agent must make his Deception roll every 100 feet in order for the diversion to be successful.

Wiles may also choose to move his gyrocopter to a closer clump of trees (100 feet) and launch an air assault, which will be infinitely more successful than the previous options since the agents are not expecting an attack from the air, especially at such close range.

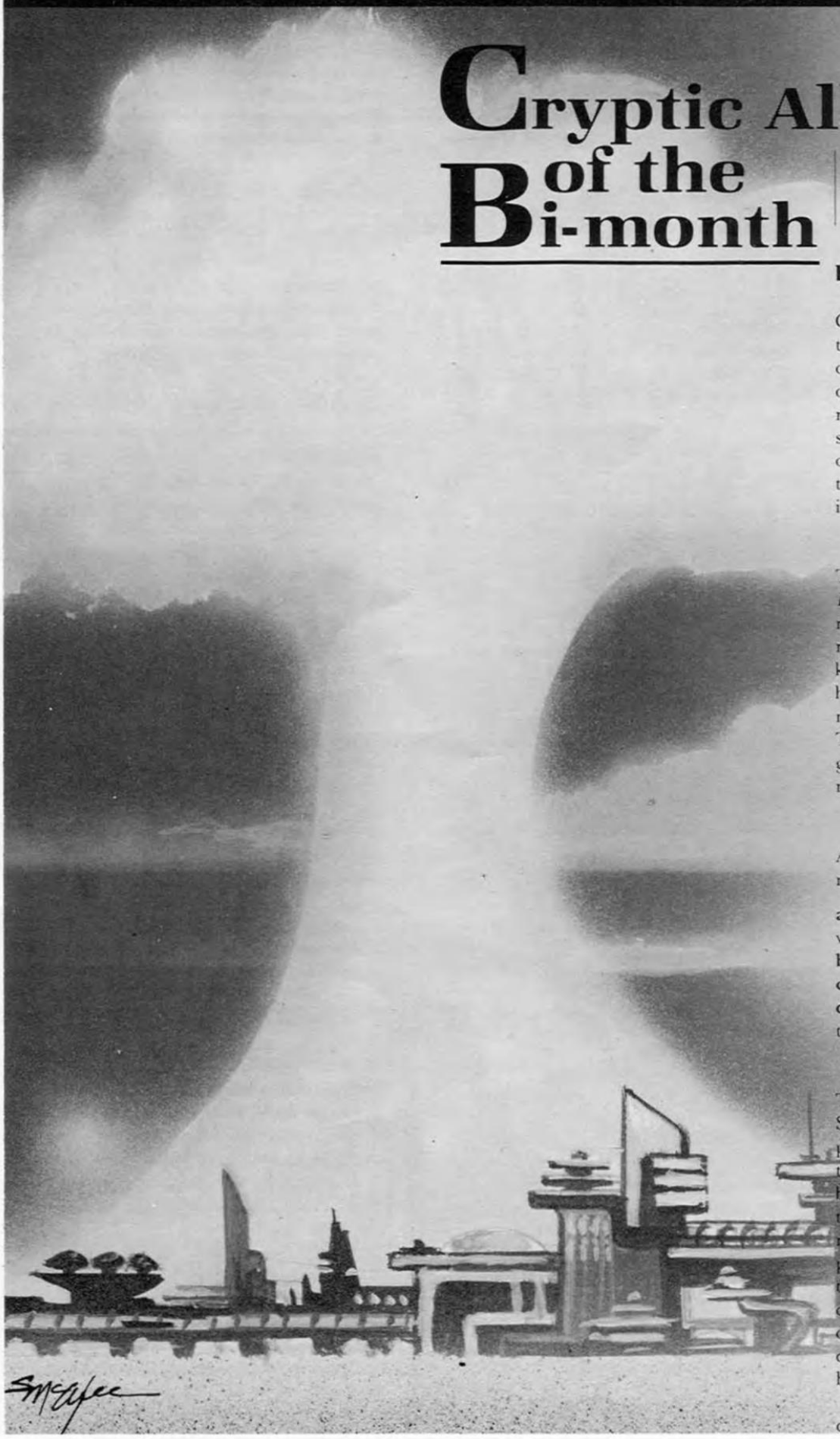
If you chose to run the encounter with more NATO agents, alter the balance in the following manner:

1. Double the number of enemy agents.
2. Give enemy agents bulletproof vests.
3. Triple the enemy agents' amount of ammunition.
4. Remove the gyrocopter from the scenario. Have NATO agents approach the Soviets from the ground.

Cryptic Alliance of the Bi-month

The Followers of The Voice

by James M. Ward



Cryptic Alliances are the primary instigators of 90% of all the adventure that goes on in the GAMMA WORLD game; the other 10% is provided by powerful mutants. This new series exists to suggest some formerly unprinted facts about each of the power groups. The information is to serve as a springboard for the alliances in your own campaigns.

Geographic Location

This month's Cryptic Alliance is *The Followers of The Voice*. This group's main base lies in a hidden valley in the middle of the mountain range once known as the Appalachians. There are heavy forests in all directions; the usual method of travel into this region is by air. The entire complex is totally underground in a forested hillside. Only a huge metal door marks its presence.

Inhabitants

At any given time the following beings reside in this complex:

a. 150 Pure Strain Humans all familiar with Tech III level equipment
b. 50 Thinker Androids
c. 200 Warrior Androids
d. 10 humanoid mutants with the max. total of mental and physical mutations

History

The complex was built by a group of Survivalists who put all their faith in the power of computer technology to bring them through the troubled years that they believed were coming. After the destruction, those who survived crawled from the ruins and began searching for more computer programs and computer hardware to help them continue. This drive for computer materials was passed on to their children, and through the generations the desire for computer devices and programs have become an obsession.

Early on, the simple home computers of the survivalists were augmented to

become a megacomputer, much like a Think Tank without the biochemical brains. The programming became so sophisticated that the machine gained a sort of survivalist intelligence. It now verbally communicates with the leader of the Followers and is quite adept at coaxing groups of Followers into Ancient ruins to find more programs and software.

All of the beings in the installation are there to provide technical assistance to this mechanical intelligence, or protect it from danger. There have been three successful attacks on the installation in its long history, and the computer doesn't want a fourth. This is why it created the current leader of the Followers.

Leader of the Followers

Cyborg/Defence borg

HIT POINTS: 150
SENSORS: A/B/C
ARMOR CLASS: 1
CONTROL: Special
POWER: B
MS: 12
IN: 18
DX: 18
PS: 200
SPEED: Pods 160/6800/120

DESCRIPTION: The leader was built after the last successful attack on the installation. A standard Defense Borg was fitted with a Cyborg braincase and given the full control over protecting and increasing the effectiveness of the station. This machine has given the orders to the rest of the group for 200 years. It has also acted as a last line of defense in three separate and unsuccessful attacks on the station. The borg will come and attack anytime the main doors are breached.

The cyborg has a very pleasant voice, and commonly rewards Followers with useful technological items when new equipment and computer technology are brought back to the main base. Although generous with the equipment of the installation, it thinks nothing of sending groups into known radiated areas for items it feels it needs. The unit stresses logic in all its Followers, and when presented with logical successful conclusions to problems it will also reward those followers with raises in rank.

The Leader is in contact with 11 other outposts within 600 kilometers of the main base. It directly manipulates the actions of these bases, which serve as clearing houses for many different types of equipment taken from the Ancients.

Defenses of the Base

Besides the mutational powers of the beings there and the large array of normal weapons found in many places in the GAMMA WORLD game, there are several defensive systems vital to the base:

a. The complex is wired with a listening system that has a range of 300 meters. Anything larger than a rabbit will be heard.
b. There is a radar network that will track flyers larger than 1 meter across, up to a distance of 1,000 kilometers.
c. The final chamber before the main computer system is programed to flash 18 intensity radiation on all raiders that enter to reach the computer.
d. The final defense is passive. There is a fake computer station with active controls and lights so that all raiders entering the area will believe they are facing the main computer unit but will actually be facing a dummy one.

Base interior chambers

The underground complex goes 300 meters into the hillside, and is a circle 250 meters in diameter. The main computer chamber and its nuclear power source are at the back, with large work areas and store rooms next. There is also a small, fully operational android vat complex.

To the front of the base are the spacious living quarters, which serve as rewards for good service.

The Borg rotates in people from the 11 other bases as their technical capacity and knowledge makes them suitable for the operation of the highly complex systems of the main base. Those beings that are replaced are given positions of responsibility and power at the lesser bases.

Concepts and policies

The primary responsibility of all members of the alliance is to bring the computer technology of the Ancients to the main base. Computer programs and devices are valuable, and bring substantial rank changes when delivered. Any other alliance can be worked with if it results in the acquisition of more computer material. That is, although logical behavior and thought are encouraged, anything goes in an effort to acquire computer material.

The discovery of new areas of the Ancients is an important secondary goal. Discovering new areas opens opportunities for discovering more hardware.

The hierarchy of power is pyramidical. The Borg is the leader, and it has two sub-commanders who are Thinker Androids. These beings each have two sub-lieutenants who are also Thinker Androids. This pyramid of structure continues down through the whole organization. Advancement up through this structure is based on technological knowledge of computers and/or the ability to bring in equipment and programs important to the group. Strong mutational powers or the use of powerful non-computer technological devices are minor concerns to those that follow the Voice.

Materials common to outside bases

All groups of this alliance which number more than 500 are given items from the main base, and kept in special shrines built by that particular group. These items include: a tape recorder with the equivalent of 90 minutes of the Borg giving advice and encouragement to all searchers for artifacts; a very strong light source that shines automatically at night; and a portable energy detector that the best members of the tribe are allowed to take out on foraging expeditions.

Flags and pennants which display the symbol of the Followers are in abundance. This symbol and others which relate to computer devices are commonly found on the art objects of the tribe.

The symbol of The Followers of the Voice: the floppy disk.

The Followers also like light in all of its forms; flashlights, lamps, unusual torches, and the like can always be found in the possessions of the group.

Legends

Few legends are passed on by The Followers of the Voice, but their major myth deals with a Follower that discovered a crazed computer doing great harm to the area he lived in. The myth reveals how he destroyed the computer which helped his people, but he was then cursed to wander the land forever, fixing damaged computers for the rest of eternity.

The only other story of any consequence concerns a fabled tree which grows computer programs. The story is about a man named Jony who travels through time planting the seeds of the fabled tree over the land. Those who find these trees are said to be lucky for the rest of their days.

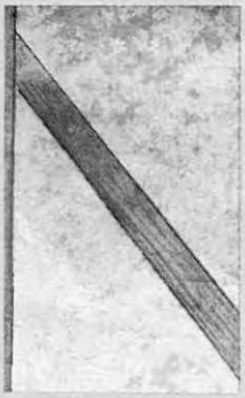
The SHADY DRAGON Inn

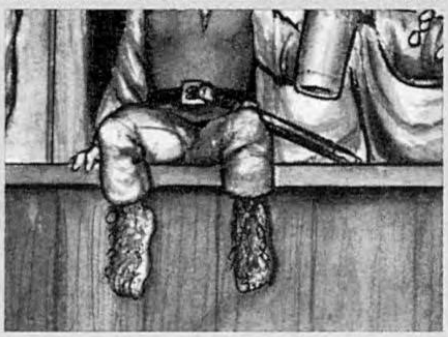
Ariadne: Serving wench
S 9; I 8; W 9; C 9; D 8; CH 16; Al N; LV 2; AC 6; hp 14; P/D 12; MW 13; S/P 14; DB 15; SP/MS 16; THACO 19

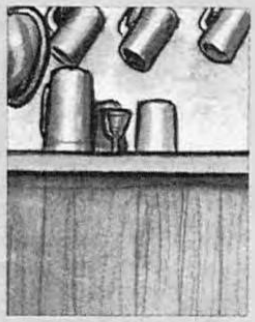
Gwynne: Serving wench
S 13; I 7; W 14; C 11; D 17; CH 14; AL L; LV 6; AC 5; hp 21; P/D 11, MW 12; S/P 11; DB 14; SP/MS 12; THACO 16
OL 45; RT 40; PP 45; MVS 45; CSS 92; HS 36; HN 1-3

Sam: Owner
S 13; I 10; W 9; C 12; D 13; CH 10; AL L; LV 8; AC 1; hp 1; P/D 2; MW 3; S/P 4; DB 5; SP/MS 4; THACO 13

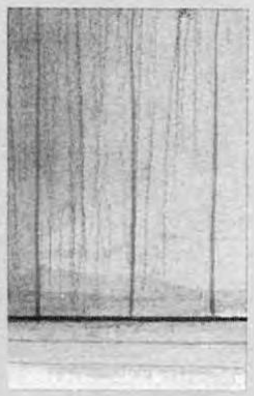
Lachlan: Ostler
S 11; I 10; W 11; C 17; D 13; CH 8; AL N; LV 9; AC 1; hp 68; P/D 4; MW 7; S/P 7; DB 7; SM/MS 7; THACO 12





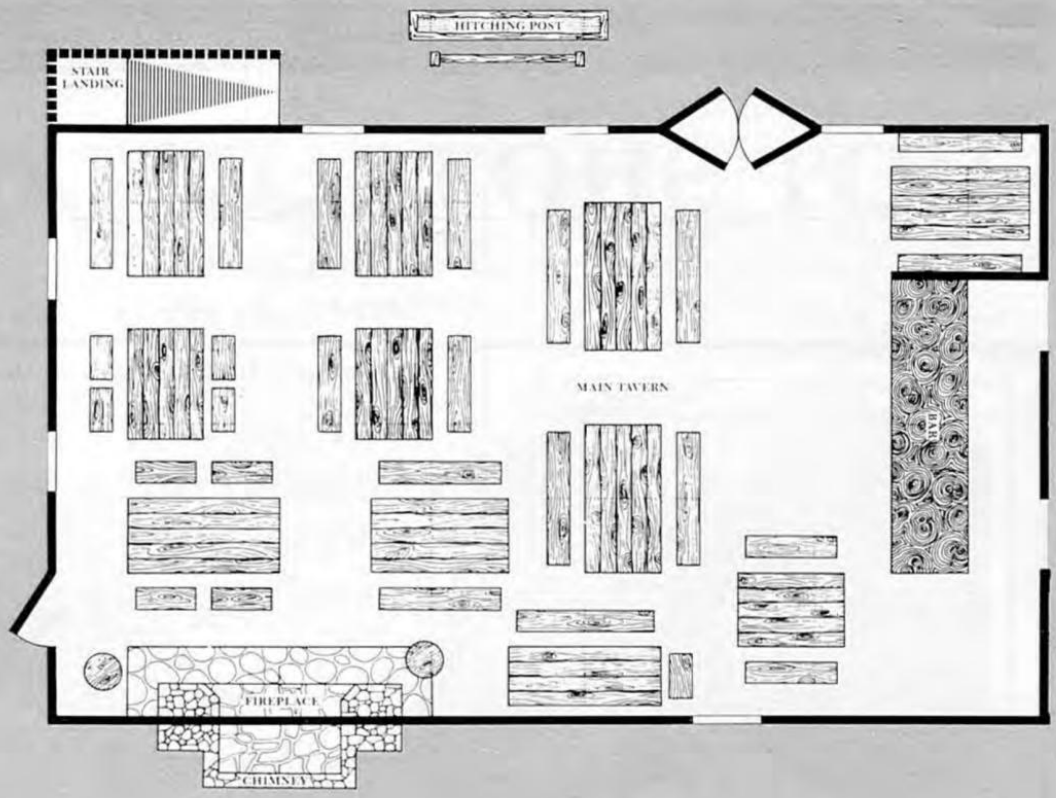


Friar Fergus: Cook
S 10; I 12; W 17; C 8; D 9; CH 8; AL L; LV 6; AC 3; hp 29; P/D 9; MW 10; S/P 12; DB 14; SP/MS 11; THACO 17



by Carl Smith

The Shady Dragon Inn is a new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game Accessory which includes floor plans and in-depth descriptions of an entire inn, plus over 100 pregenerated characters. What follows is an even more detailed description of the main tavern and the people who work there.



The Shady Dragon Inn — Main Tavern —

The main tavern room of the Shady Dragon Inn has dark walnut floors. The tables, benches, and stools are of golden oak. The ceiling and walls are white-washed. The air, summer or winter, smells of roasting meats, burning wood, and beer.

Made of mortared stone, the fireplace extends about 1′ out from the wall, and the hearth is raised 4″ off of the floor. The mantlepiece is made of a solid chunk of slate, polished by many hands over the years, giving it a dull shine.

At the rear left side of the hearth is a loose stone. Anyone removing the stone will hear a click, a spring set in the masonry which keeps the stone from falling into the hole behind it. The cavity is one inch square, by eighteen inches deep. Inside is a sock containing 200ep and 75gp with six gems (worth 420gp each). The fire must be out for anyone to examine the hole. There are no traps.

The bar is made of highly polished dark walnut and has a raised, molded edge around the front and sides. The wall directly behind the bar is lined with two wide shelves which hold various "bar-type" items. On the top shelf are some expensive wines, champagnes, two bottles of aged brandy, four silver goblets (4gp each), and 12 pewter goblets. At the far right of the top shelf is a huge stoneware mug where the serving wenches keep their tips; there are 50 — 300 copper pieces in it at any give time.

The bottom shelf holds a number of beer kegs and wine casks (cheap wine). Directly under the bottom shelf is a series of pegs which hold mugs by the handles.

When business is slow, the workers sit at the small table next to the bar (in the northeast corner). This table is also cooler in summer, being next to the door. In winter, they occupy the table next to the fireplace to keep warm.

Outside, beyond the hitching post, is a well where the wenches go for water and to play with the tavern's cat. The tavern also has its own grey mouse, which likes to hang around by the fireplace.

Tap room and furniture dimensions

Eleven tables in room, all 2″ thick.
- **a.** 3 5′×10′ oak tables (15+ str. to throw)
- **b.** 3 5′×7′ oak tables (12+ str. to throw)
- **c.** 4 5′×9′ oak tables (14+ str. to throw)
- **d.** 1 4′×10′ oak table (14+ str. to throw)

Benches, all 2″ thick.
- **a.** 13 15″×8′ (10+ str. to throw)
- **b.** 9 15″×3′ (5+ str. to throw)
- **c.** 4 15″×6′ (8+ str. to throw)
- **d.** 2 1″ radius round stools (3+ str. to throw)

Bar, 4″ thick
- **a.** 1 5′×20′ bar

Windows, with 2″ thick oak shutters.
- **a.** 6 3′×3′ windows

Doors
- **a.** 6 8′×10′×4″ oaken double door
- **b.** 1 5′×8′×4″ oak door

Fireplace
- **a.** 20′ exterior × 5′ hearth
- **b.** 16′×2½′ mantle
- **c.** 7′×9′ interior

Additional items

Sam keeps several items behind the bar:

a. A sleeping potion which acts like a *Sleep* spell cast by a 4th level magic-user. There are three doses under the bar for rowdy customers who are too big for either Sam or Lachlan to handle. Once victims are asleep, Sam and Lachlan gently deposit them outside the tavern.

b. A cudgel which acts as a mace +1, but appears to be an ordinary club 30″ long. It is as big as two fists at its large end, and tapers to the width of a staff. This weapon can only be used to subdue, and may never be used to kill.

c. A money box which contains 40gp, 123sp, and 81cp. It recognizes Sam and the other four inn workers. Should an authorized person attempt to remove or open the box, it will call for help in Common, Lawful, and Neutral tongues. The box will alternate screaming for help with pronouncing vague but horrible curses upon the mover.

A secret compartment in the money box holds two gems worth 200gp each. Anyone who removes or touches the gems with bare hands at any time must save vs. Magic or fall into a magical slumber as if affected by a *Sleep* spell.

d. If things get really out-of-hand, Sam keeps a *Displacer Cloak* behind the bar which he can don to hit brawlers on the heads to subdue them.

HOT SHOTS and COLD WATER

by Roger E. Moore

A long time ago, in the *Letters* section of POLYHEDRON™ Newszine, a gamer asked for ways to handle player characters who "always think they are hot stuff." It was suggested that DMs consider using high-level non-player characters to teach the player characters humility. This sometimes works, but unfortunately won't work very often and usually works on the wrong people.

Several things go against it. First, players within a group tend to stick together, and may unexpectedly pitch in and trash out any threat to them or one of their number. This happens even if the threatened person isn't universally liked by other group members. The temptation to get involved in a fight can be too much, and group members may want to bump off any high-level NPCs they meet so *their* characters will be the new "hot shots" in town.

Players will also eventually resent the DM's use of high-level encounters in attempts to kill off or disgrace characters in some fashion. This will lead to abrupt termination of gaming with that DM.

Another problem is escalation. It seems the more often that high-level encounters start appearing, the more cautious and heavily armed adventuring groups become from accumulating treasures and experience points. It often happens that other DMs, sensing that one Dungeon Master is going to be using tougher encounters, will arrange things so the characters (if the same ones are being used in all campaigns) will find more powerful treasures, even allowing them to gain the much-beloved Atomic Hand Grenade. This is especially likely if the DM using tougher encounters is also cutting back on treasures being given out in his adventures.

So, although using high-level NPCs can help, often it won't do more than escalate the size, power, and number of encountered monsters without reducing the players' egos. It might be more helpful to look at who is *really* responsible for allowing some of the so-called "hot shot" characters to get their start.

In reviewing old copies of DRAGON® Magazine and other gaming magazines, one notes a number of articles and letters to the editor which decry the appearance of "player character demigods" who own every magical item known and then some, who have 54th-level characters in all classes, and so forth.

Hey, who made those characters what they are? Are players *completely* responsible for how much treasure their characters accumulate? If they are, then they're cheating by inventing their characters' magical items, and that can be dealt with by exclusion or careful confrontation.

No, the Dungeon Master has a lot to do with this, too. There are Dungeon Masters who let characters gain more than one level per adventure. There are Dungeon Masters who have gods appear and raise characters a dozen levels at a time. There are Dungeon Masters who put artifacts in their treasure hoards (with millions of gold pieces to boot). There are Dungeon Masters who make it awfully easy to kill Asmodeus or Demogorgon in a few blows. This certainly feeds the hot shot problem. I should know.

Forbid the 100th-level character with the +10 sword from entering the campaign, and there is one less hot shot.

I used to set up adventures in which characters latched onto the Silmarils, Thor's Hammer, and Captain America's flying shield, not to mention artifacts like Excalibur. The adventures were entertaining, but eventually no one felt challenged by them, and things fell apart. Small wonder. Was it the players' fault? Not really. It took time for me to figure out what was going wrong, and how to fix it. It would be interesting to know how many of the DMs who've complained about "player character demigods" actually helped create those demigods.

In all fairness, of course, there are many DMs who didn't have anything to do with creating such demigods. A DM may just want to run a good adventure, but the only characters the group can come up with are unexpectedly powerful. This, though, can be cured by allowing the players to roll up lower level characters for an adventure, or having everyone roll up new first level characters. A DM doesn't have to let just *any* character wander into his or her campaign, even if the player of that character is a best friend. Best friends will understand if you want your adventure to be challenging for all, and not a walkover.

Getting rid of PC demigods goes a long way toward getting rid of "hot shot" characters. Forbid the 100th-level character with the +10 sword from entering the campaign or adventure, and there is one less hot shot. This leaves the generally "normal" characters, whatever "normal" is for your campaign. Does this cure the hot shot problem? Not entirely, though the situation is a little easier to deal with.

The essence of playing fantasy role-playing games like the D&D® or AD&D™ games is simply to have a good time. The players and referee interact to create a story, a common myth in which everyone participates in the guises of their characters. It is difficult to find fault with using player-character demigods, so long as everyone in the group (including the DM) is having a good time with them. If so, then there's no problem.

Inevitably, if someone has a character that's been around for a while and has been generally successful, that person will take pride in that character. The player will talk about past adventures, great deeds, treasures won, etc. The longer the character has been around, the more attached the person will become to it.

This creates its own problems, however. There comes a time when the player realizes that the character might eventually be killed, and this doesn't go down well. The character may be high level and quite powerful, but the adventures the character is going on have become increasingly dangerous, too. Some people retire their tougher characters to keep them "young and pretty" (and alive). Others keep using their characters, but become more defensive, hedging more of their gambles, and accumulating all sorts of items to lessen the chances of that character getting killed permanently. Some DMs interpret this as being a "hot shot."

This can be dealt with without a lot of fuss. Adventures can be set up which may not involve risk of death, but would involve lots of work and excitement for the characters. Political and religious maneuvering, clearing terrain of minor monsters, and similar adventures still throw the element of the unexpected into the characters' lives without endangering them. The referee needs to remember that while he or she has access to literally millions of monsters and NPCs, the players have very few, usually only one or two apiece. One can always roll up a new "first-level nerd," but a tenth-level character is hard to replace.

Now let's change the perspective around. This article has looked at the question of "hot shot" characters from the players' view, yet everyone can recall

someone who was difficult to get along with, who played characters who hogged the treasure or were uncooperative. These are the ones that most people think of when the subject of hot shot characters comes up. What can you do about them?

There are two courses of action. If the person is truly too obnoxious to get along with, then the person should be excluded from the group. This is touchy because nobody wants to be the "axeman" who goes over to the person and says, "Look, we're having a lot of trouble getting along with you in the group, for a lot of reasons, and I'm speaking for everyone when I say that we'd rather you didn't game with us anymore," or "It's difficult to be a DM for you, because you keep arguing whenever I rule against you, and the game turns into a big mess of hurt feelings all around, and I just don't want to run a group with you in it anymore."

It may be hard, but if no one says it, then things are going to stay bad until everyone has been driven out of the game. The odd thing is, once somebody does manage to get the offending person out of the group, then the game gets better. People enjoy themselves, the atmosphere is less oppressive, and so on. The game is fun You may still have to deal with the person who was put out of the group, but they usually manage to cope with it and either find something else to do or find another group to game with.

The other alternative can be used if the person appears to be "salvageable" for gaming; he pouts sometimes when he doesn't get his way, but he makes some pretty good jokes, or she's rude and often pushy, but has a lot of experience in gaming and shares treasure she finds. Everyone has some fault somewhere. So how can a DM deal with people like these? You don't want to lose them, but you're having trouble with them as they are.

It would be nice if there were an easy answer to this problem, but there isn't one. The group may have to resign itself to putting up with the less friendly aspects of everyone else's behavior. The DM will have to put up with it, too (like everyone else has to put up with the DM). Talking with someone about their "problem behavior" may go a long way to help.

It should be firmly stated that killing obnoxious characters isn't the best solution. Having "blue bolts from heaven" smack a hot shot character on the head just ticks off the hot shot player and can lead to more problems. Having a god show up and sock it to the character is just as bad (unless the hot shot has been mouthing off against the gods themselves and one of the deities hears its name being abused; then the character deserves everything it's got coming to it.) Dungeon Masters need to find a way to not kill characters. Any fool can kill a character. It's another thing to get a character to rethink its behavior and values.

Dungeon Masters need to find a way to not kill characters. Any fool can kill a character.

It is very important to be subtle about this. Direct threats rarely work. A good DM should spend time considering the various strengths that characters have that make them think they're invincible. Is it the number of pluses on his sword, or the thickness of her armor? Is it a history of past successes with huge monetary returns? Make a few mental notes on the props that keep a character's ego inflated, and consider what it would take to knock the character's confidence out like a light. Take away a character's self-assurance, add the element of the unexpected and the unpredictable, and a lot of hot shots in your group will cease to be.

Imagine a scenario in which a group becomes shipwrecked on a small jungle island. Up until this point, everything has gone pretty much as expected. The characters grumpily drop their belongings and pitch camp under a tree as a downpour soaks them completely. There are one or two standard encounters with boa constrictors which the party easily wins.

But there are other things entering the picture. No one in the group hears birds calling in the trees. Except for a few snakes, no other animals or creatures of any kind can be seen. Characters on watch at night hear strange calls, like random bits of conversation amplified and echoing across the darkness, words that make no sense or are randomly ordered. Characters start getting nervous.

Attracted by odd noises, they come across a ruined farmhouse, and meet some ghouls. These ghouls, however, do not act like "normal" ghouls. They are carrying on a weird parody of normal daily life: some laboring in sterile, rock-strewn fields with broken implements, some laying out a table in the farmhouse with empty plates and broken glasses. The ghouls see the adventurers and attack them with wild cries.

I used the above adventure on a group one evening and it worked quite well. The player characters were quite powerful; they probably had more magical weaponry on them than most dungeons have in their first three levels, and they shouldn't have had much trouble cleaning up the adventure. Things, however, were not what the players were used to seeing. The lack of normal creatures on the island, the strange calls in the night, and the encounter with the walking dead at the farmhouse shook their confidence.

All of this was carefully presented to the group, and treated with great seriousness. Here, on this island, was an awful thing that left an undying mockery of life in its passing. It was unquestionably evil and powerful. Not once in the adventure had I come out and said that. No hot shots appeared in the group, even in the end when the group met and defeated the island's necromancer king.

Horror was the key element in preventing the appearance of hot shots, though the group was also experienced and not prone to bickering or petty rivalries. Manipulating the atmosphere of an adventure and keeping the unexpected alive goes a long way to deflating egos and adding excitement to role-playing.

Most hot shots are like you and me; they play to have fun. Unbearable players can be dealt with by exclusion or working out the problems.

Dungeon Masters need to take responsibility for creating hot shots, and should use more care in managing their campaigns. DMs can discreetly pour a little cold water on local hot shots, and do it in such a way as to avoid singling out the hot shot for unfair punishment, and give the whole group an adventure to remember as well. Ultra-tough NPCs and monsters are not the best answer; setting the mood of the adventure might work a lot better. Be subtle. Make the hot shots sweat a little. It'll do them good.

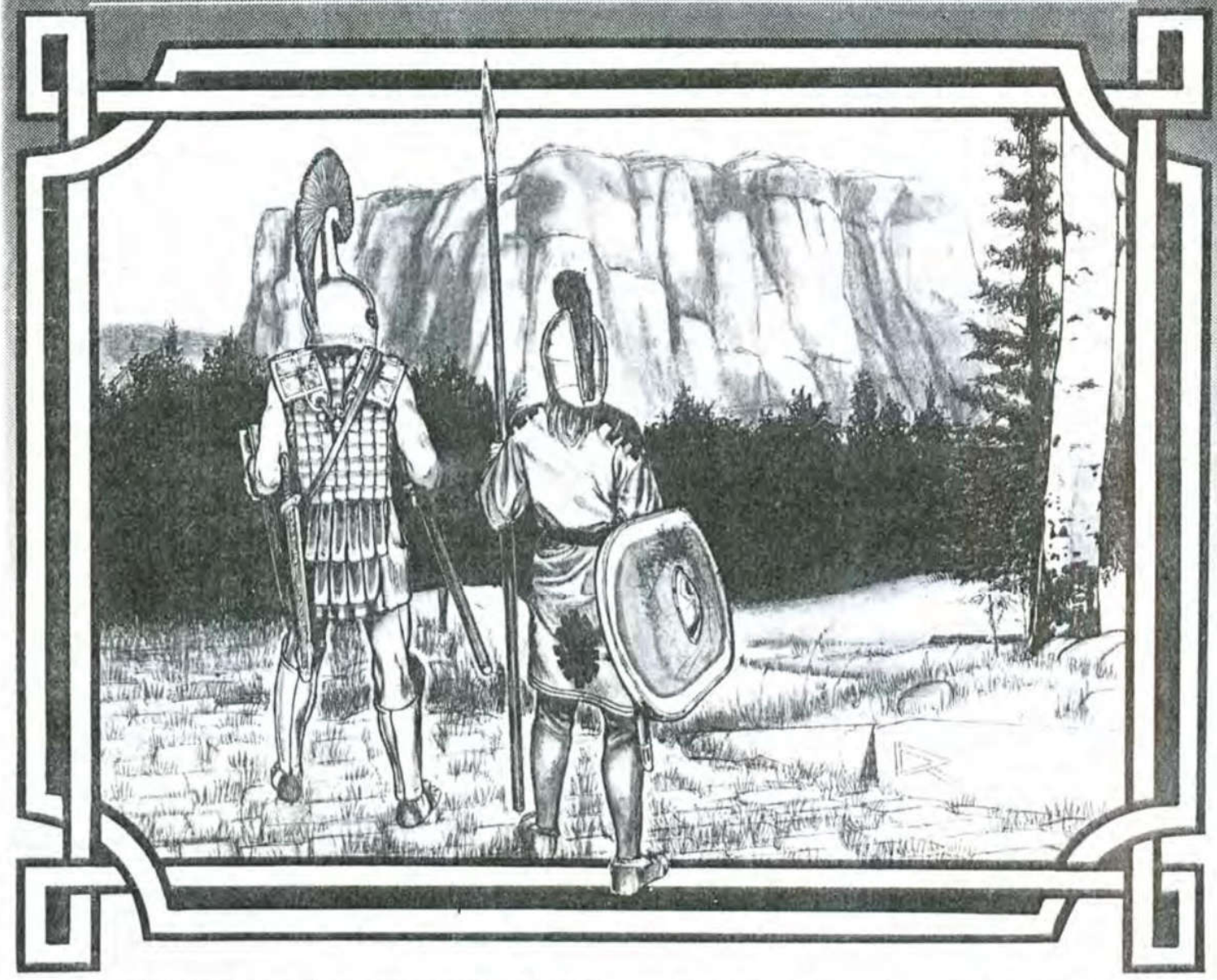
For ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game

RPGA™ MODULE 5

THE RIDDLE OF DOLMEN MOOR

by Bob Blake

An AD&D™ Adventure for 6-10 Characters, Levels 4-7



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THE RIDDLE OF DOLMEN MOOR

This mini-module was a tournament adventure originally run at the GEN CON® XVI Convention. This scenario can be run in either a tournament or a campaign setting. The Dungeon Master (DM) should read the adventure thoroughly before running it.

STOP! The rest of the information in the module is for the DM's use in running the adventure. If you plan to play in the adventure as a character, stop reading here.

Introduction

The encounters in this adventure were designed for a balanced team of 10 characters, levels 4-7. Each encounter has boxed information to be read to the players and unboxed DM notes describing how to run it. Some encounters have a **Tournament notes** section with special instructions for tournament play only. In this module, the following abbreviations are used:

AC = Armor Class	THACO = To Hit AC 0
MV = Move	D = Damage
HD = Hit Dice	SA = Special Attacks
hp = hit points	SD = Special Defenses
#AT = Number of Attacks	MR = Magic Resistance
F = Fighter	S = Strength
M = Magic-user	I = Intelligence
I = Illusionist	W = Wisdom
C = Cleric	D = Dexterity
D = Druid	C = Constitution
T = Thief	Ch = Charisma

The number after the class is the level: F4 = fourth level fighter.

The Riddle of Dolmen Moor is the fifth adventure in the epic *Prophecy of Brie*. It is a wilderness trip to the ancient burial ground of Pellham's kings. The characters must use the ancient poem of the "Lineage of Kings" to deduce which tomb is Llywelyn's. However, they will discover the tomb is sealed by powerful wards.

Tournament Play

The recommended playing time for this adventure is three hours. Achieving the goal is the primary victory condition, with the number of successful encounters secondary. Casualties, then expenditure of resources (spells, items, etc.), are used as tie-breakers.

Players may use only the *Players Handbook* during play. However, all personal magical items that the characters start with are known and completely understood by the owners. The DM should brief characters on the capabilities of their magical items if requested.

There are no wandering monsters in tournament play. The random monster tables included here are for campaign play only.

Monsters will fight to the best of their ability unless the tournament notes specify otherwise; they will neither check morale nor flee unless noted, and they will be fully aware of the capabilities of their weapons, magical items, and spells, and will use these to advantage.

Random Encounters

Random encounters will occur only in campaign play. The DM rolls for encounters in the morning and evening, with a 1 on 1d20 indicating an encounter.

Damrosil River Encounters		Kingsway Road Encounters	
Die Roll	Encounter	Die Roll	Encounter
1-2	1-4 stags, watering with herd at the river's edge with 4-8 herd members each	1	1-6 brown bears
3	1-12 wild boars	2	2-2 ogres
4	5-20 giant frogs	3	5-20 pixies
5	1-6 giant pike	4	2-8 satyrs
6	1-3 black bears	5	1-2 stag, giant
7	1 giant snapping turtle	6	3-30 stirges
8	4-7 NPCs, Adventuring party (1d4+3)	7	2-20 sylvan elves
		8	1-12 trolls

Each character in the NPC party will be of 1-6 (1d4+2) level. At least one magic-user and one cleric will be in the group. NPC parties can be found either on the water or traveling along the river's edge, probably opposite the party's direction.

Players' Background

Two hundred years ago the people of the kingdom of Pellham rose in revolt against the oppressive monarchy of King Alendus II. Mobs surged through the streets of the capital city of Widdershin, forced their way into the palace, and ransacked it. Everything of monetary value was carried away and all else burned.

The monarchy was replaced by a council, which is currently headed by the seneschal Gwydion. However, that the council is now floundering is no secret, which has resulted in a groundswell of popular opinion for the return of the monarchy. A strong individual is needed now to pull things back together, but there is one problem: who will be king? Certainly not Gwydion nor any of the council!

Perhaps the answer lies in a packet received from a religious sect known as the Brothers of Brie. Several old manuscripts were enclosed, the most important of which is the following prophecy:

With six hands of Loring the lost upon the Wheel of Time, at the moment Bazel mounts his chariot to do battle with the seven daughters, the dead King shall rise to seize the triad with hands that cannot grasp and eyes that cannot see. All wards broken and the mystic barriers pierced with mating swords, three saints and sinners will struggle in the dust, both and neither to triumph. And while the sundered Earth spews forth the dregs of centuries, a new order shall come upon the Land.

Most intriguing to be sure, but which dead king? With the looting of the palace all those years ago, not even the proper lineage of the dynasties is remembered. But there is one king still held in reverence by all, Llywelyn the Just. Of course! The Prophecy is ancient, probably written about the time of the founding of Pellham. Its authenticity is unquestionable, but is this the time of its fulfillment?

The task was to determine if indeed it was time for the return of Llywelyn. In Loring's Wood you discovered the Wheel of Time and proved that the time of the prophecy was at hand. Then the Brothers of Brie, deciding that "mystic barriers pierced with mating swords" must refer to locks and keys, sent you to purchase a set of nine antiquated keys from Lord Krell the Robber Baron. You got the keys, finding out in the process that Krell's reputation was well-earned.

Llywelyn's kingly trappings were not buried with him, for an accident to his funeral barge lost his baldric, sceptre, and crowned helm. The sceptre was sold by a bugbear chieftain, providing a clue to the location of the other items. Your group invaded the bugbear colony in the Eyes of Berta cave complex and found the baldric and helm, barely escaping with your lives.

You were then sent in search of the ancient wizard Caer, who possessed the elixir needed to return King Llywelyn from the land of the dead. Your journey up the river Damrosil was perilous, but you reached Caer's mountain retreat, climbed the mountain, and found the wizard within. Your answers to his cunning riddles won you the elixir of life you sought.

The prophecy will soon be fulfilled. All the necessary preparations have been made. All that remains is to find the tomb of King Llywelyn. The search will begin at Dolmen Moor, the resting place of Pellham's kings. Many kings are buried there, each in a separate mound. However, the destruction of most of the royal archives and the span of time involved has erased memory of all but a few of the past kings, let alone the exact location of their final resting places.

You will journey north up the Damrosil River, leaving it when you come to the Kingsway, an ancient road that runs from the Fens of Taravol to Dolmen Moor. There, you must find which mound holds the mortal remains of Llywelyn. But beware, for Dolmen Moor is haunted by the spirits of the dead by night.

Campaign note: Suggested compensation for this part of the quest is 500 gp (and XP) per character level.

DM Information

Remember to shift to indoor movement and ranges when the characters enter the mounds. On Dolmen Moor, a denizen of a mound will generally not attack until the party enters its mound, nor will it pursue unless stated otherwise in the encounter key.

The adventure begins as the characters, rowing in small boats up the Damrosil, approach the Fens of Tavoral. They have two boats with four oars each, and will divide five to a boat.

THE DAMROSIL RIVER

1. The Minstrel of the Fens

> The trip up the Damrosil has been uneventful. The river becomes wider and more sluggish as it enters the fens. A myriad of small islands dot the water and the unmistakable odor of swampland hangs upon the air. The vegetation is profuse, overhanging the banks so that at times no more than a boat-width of open water remains. The sound of a lone voice singing in this wilderness has become louder, as if you've been going toward it.

The voice sounds human, though the words cannot be made out. One of the party will think he hears the name "Llywelyn."

> As you push through a wall of vines, the singer is revealed. A barefooted old man sits cross-legged on a grass-covered hummock in the middle of a wide pool. His face is clean shaven, but his thin, silver hair, straggling from beneath a black leather cap, has grown to waist-length and is uncombed. His threadbare clothing, apparently purple when new, is long out of fashion. He strums a lute of exquisite tone and workmanship.
>
> Near the hump of dry land, a small, red, smooth-skinned arm and hand are thrust up through the surface of the pool, shaking a tambourine in rhythm. Nearby, a blue cap with a yellow feather floats on the water's surface. As the song comes to a break, the minstrel looks at you with haunted eyes and begins again.

This is Loring the Lost (AC 0; MV 0; F/T/B 7/7/8; hp special; #AT special), though the characters will not recognize him. The purpose of this encounter is to expose the characters to "The Lineage of Kings." Loring will not respond to the party, but will sing and play his lute. The party has six rounds for action. When Loring reaches the seventh verse, all characters must save vs. Paralysis or be paralyzed. Any characters who tried to block their ears get a +2 bonus. Other methods of avoiding paralysis are detailed below. A bard or magic-user will recognise the red arm as that of an imp.

> The lute's tones pierce every fiber of your bodies, and you are now able to hear the singer's words clearly and distinctly.

If the party rows away immediately (at least two rowers per boat), they escape this encounter, but do not get the poem. (The poem provides vital clues once the party reaches Dolmen Moor. The players will receive the poem at the end of the encounter, providing they have heard all of it at least once.)

The party's boats have stopped 30 feet away from the hummock (about one round's movement). At the end of the song, the paralysis disappears and Loring begins the song again. With the second singing of the poem, imps will pop out of the water at the rate of one per verse until the gate to Acheron is closed (see below). They will taunt and pester the party, then swarm to the attack. The party has six rounds to act, for when Loring reaches the seventh verse, he will say his name for the third time, and the characters must again save vs. Paralyzation. Those failing will be paralyzed until the end of the second singing of the poem (16 rounds). If the party rows away immediately after the first singing, the imps will not pursue.

Imps

(AC 2; MV 6"/18"; HD 2+2; hp 12 each; #AT 1; THACO 16; D 1-4; SA **Detect Good, Detect Magic, Invisibility, Suggestion;** SD poison, regenerate 1 hp per round, need silver or magical weapons to hit, immune to cold, fire and electrical attacks, save vs. Spells as 7 HD; MR 25%). They will NOT use their tails.

If the party decides to fight the imps, two imps will attack each character who actively defends; any imps left over will try to kidnap paralyzed characters. Each round, one imp (if available) will land on each paralyzed character. When three imps have landed on a character, the character will be flown into the water (and off to Acheron). An attack against kidnapping imps will force all of them off the intended victim, so it will be another three rounds before the rescued character can be carried off again. The imps will not use their tails nor try to overturn the boats.

The third time Loring begins to sing, the party has six more rounds of action before all must save vs. Paralyzation. If the encounter goes this long, the party will be fighting 22 imps! Their best hope at this time is to shut down the gate to Acheron.

Avoiding Paralysis: Loring is immortal, and immune to physical attacks. He can be asked or ordered to stop singing, but will ignore any such pleas or demands unless his name, Loring the Lost, is used. He will continue to strum the melody on the lute in any case, which maintains a gate to Acheron. The lute projects a magical field that protects it and its player against **Charm Person, Magic Missile, Fireball, Hold Person, Silence 15' r.** and **Lightning Bolt** spells. Casting a **Silence** on the party will work, but absolutely no verbal communication or coordination should be allowed.

Closing the Gate: Loring's playing can be stopped with a **Web** spell (which will NOT halt his singing), or a physical attack to smash the lute or cut its strings (treat it as AC 0 vs. physical attacks). A **Warp Wood** on the lute or **Heat Metal** on its strings will also work. A

Silence spell cast on the party will work, but will prevent the characters from coordinating their actions. If the playing stops, the arm with the tambourine goes back into the water, leaving only those imps who had passed through for the party to deal with. Attacks on the arm itself have no effect.

If a party successfully closes the gate, Loring will speak. He will thank them and reveal a secret sign that will get them past the satyrs in the next encounter without fighting (a circle of willow tied to a staff). He will then have a seizure and begin singing once more. There is nothing the party can do to help him.

Loring the Lost was the twelfth king of Pellham. He had little chance of ascending the throne, being the fourth son of the third wife of Agneus Expander, and spent much of his youth as a wandering minstral. Two ambitions drove him, to become king and to become immortal, and, with the aid of imps from Acheron, he slew eight nobles ahead of him in line of succession gain the throne. His reign, however, lasted but a few days. The imps tormented him with maddening dreams until he fled to seek the Wheel of Time. He has since realized immortality, on Arawn's terms.

After his encounter with the mad druid Eveyd, Loring drank of the Waters of Forgetfulness in Loring's Wood. He was drawn to this island in the Fens of Tavarol 285 years ago, commanded by Arawn to forever play his magical lute and sing the same song. The lute keeps a gate open to Acheron, and the song causes paralysis in the listener.

2. The Woodland Pipes

If the characters closed the gate to Acheron and made the secret sign, they will NOT encounter the satyrs here.

> Shortly after the encounter with the Mad Minstrel of the Fens, the ancient paving stones of the Kingsway are seen rising out of the mud on the southern shore, leading off to the east. The road enters an unremarkable forest and, while the trees are dense, the looming bulk of a plateau, Dolmen Moor, is seen in the distance.
>
> Walking is pleasant, the normal forest sounds seeming to lift one's spirits and speed the journey. Even the sound of some large-bodied animal (probably a deer or maybe an elk) is welcomed and unthreatening. The sweet and soothing melody of a shepherd's pipes kindles a desire to remain here forever.

The piping is from a band of eight satyrs (AC 5; MV 18"; HD 5; hp 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 23, 26, 30; #AT 1; THACO 15; D 2-8; SA **Charm, Sleep** or **Cause Fear** with pipes; MR 50%) that inhabits this area of the forest. There is one piper, and his music is to **Charm**. Anyone failing the saving throw vs. Spells will wander off toward the piping unless physically prevented from doing so. Two of the satyrs wait to take the charmed characters to the lair, the other five satyrs will melee anyone not charmed until all potential captives have been taken, then they will flee. The **Satyrs' Lair** encounter is played *only* if the player characters pursue.

Tournament note: A **Dispel** will automatically free charmed characters in its area of effect.

The Satyrs' Lair

The party may follow the trail of the satyrs and attempt to rescue any enspelled characters or simply continue on to Dolmen Moor. Following the fleeing creatures to their lair is easy enough, though the satyrs will fight to the death to protect it. Shortly after the party begins pursuit, they will hear the urgent blasts of a hunting horn. The trail leads northeast into the woods to a cave, the mouth of which is 30 feet above ground level. A heavy growth of trees and brush surrounds a small clearing before the cave, and to either side of the entrance are mounds of rocks and boulders on the slope.

Six more satyrs (AC 5 or 1; MV 18"; HD 5; hp 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 20; #AT 1; THACO 15; D 2-8; MR 50%) are in the cave guarding

the captives; the remainder of the eight originally encountered are divided equally on the slopes to either side of the cave. The rocks, boulders and trees provide them 50% cover, thus raising their armor class to 1. They will hurl spears (1-6 points) and small rocks (1-4 points) if the characters approach within range, but will not come out to melee. Those in the caves will throw spears. The cave is small, so if a **Fireball** is thrown *into* the cave, any captive characters within will take damage as well.

On the third melee round, three centaurs (AC 5; MV 18"; HD 4; hp 16, 18, 22; #AT 2; THACO 15; D 1-8/1-6), summoned by the horn, will charge from the woods. Each will fight until he takes half or more damage, then flee.

Once the centaurs and satyrs are defeated, the lair may be searched. Inside will be found the captives, unharmed by the satyrs, and a **Scroll of Protection from Undead**.

DOLMEN MOOR

Keep track of game turns in this section; on the fifteenth turn the party will encounter the Undead Army (see details for this encounter at the end of this section). There will be no other wandering monsters on Dolmen Moor itself.

> The plateau of Dolmen Moor rises 200 feet above the surrounding countryside. The only road to it is the Kingsway, which reaches the top through a series of switchbacks. The top is relatively flat, characterized by a number of man-made mounds.

From ground level these mounds look to be scattered about in a random fashion, though as can be seen on the map, the mounds are actually arranged in concentric circles around a central temple (this will be obvious only if the party conducts an aerial reconnaissance).

Pelcolb the Pious, fifth king of Pellham, hit upon this formalized burial scheme. He caused the construction of the central temple/mausoleum to house the remains of the dead kings of the dynasty then in power. When the dynasty changed, the old line was removed and buried in mounds in a circle around the temple, which now was to house those of the new dynasty. This pattern continued, resulting in the present layout.

The first mounds were simple affairs, but, as the centuries passed, the new mounds became larger and more opulent. They may be classified in three types:

Type III *(Outer Circle)*: These are smaller mounds, some even planted with trees that have grown into sizable copses. All have at least two chambers, some with underground levels. The doorways are ornately carved, most with carvings dedicated to the dead king within. All mounds in the outer circle are Type III.

Type II *(Middle Circle)*: These mounds are larger, most single-chambered but some with two. All are lined with stone instead of logs, though the covering is the same. The door ways of many are inscribed stone slabs.

Type I *(Inner Circle)*: These are small, single chambered mounds, lined with logs and covered with stones and a layer of earth. The doorways are wooden, with an inscribed stone lintel.

All tombs are marked with the heraldric devices of the kings, but time and the destruction of the royal records will prevent the characters from recognizing the tomb of any specific king. The device of each king will be a variation of a eagle over crossed swords.

The characters are seeking the tomb of Llywelyn among all these mounds, and, if they remember Loring's song, may do so easily enough. The first king in each dynasty is buried in a mound directly north of the central temple, the rest of the dynasty interred in the same circle in a clockwise fashion.

Llywelyn was the third king of the third dynasty, thus his tomb is the third mound in the third circle, counting from the north. If the party has figured things out, they may make a few simple tests to verify the scheme based on the song, for many of the statements about the past kings hold true for their present condition. For example, Loring said that Ciron the Hearty drinks in death still, and, on entering his tomb, they will find him entombed in a large cask of ale, and so on.

Except where otherwise noted, the characters must actually enter a burial mound to have an encounter. Generally, the occupants of the tombs will not pursue if the burial mound is left.

The party arrives about two hours before dark. The Undead Army will arrive in 15 turns.

Key to the Burial Mounds

1. Central Temple

This limestone building is constructed in the shape of an equilateral triangle, 150 feet long per side, each point truncated to form a 30 foot long wall. There are nine pillars which support the interior of the temple, three to a point in descending size. There are also double doors in each point, constructed of bronze; each panel is 5 feet wide and 15 feet high. Flanking each set of double doors is a pair of pink granite statues, 8 feet tall and carved to represent armored dwarven warriors.

The statues, similar to caryatid columns, were a late addition to the structure by Blaine to protect those lying within the Central Temple. They will animate and attack any would-be grave robbers. A long-forgotten dwarven phrase will prevent their attack, allowing the temple to be entered.

The statues (AC 3; MV 6"; HD 5; hp 25 each; #AT 1; THACO 15; D 1-12; SD half damage from normal weapons, no magical weapon bonus damage, 25% chance of weapon breakage -5% per plus for magical weapons) will animate if any character comes within 20 feet of the door they guard, shrinking to dwarven size and taking on a fleshy appearance when activated. They will move to stand before the portal to prevent entrance. If destroyed, they turn to stone; if the intruders perish or withdraw, they return to their former condition.

The interior of the temple is of smooth finished stone work. Inset panels, carved in bas-relief, are placed around the walls, separated by the remains of tapestries. These are dedicated to Alendus Crebus, Pelcolb the Pious, Lascron, and Llywelyn.

Inside is a central altar and 12 granite sarcophagi. Each sarcophagus has a flat granite top, inscribed with the name of the deceased within. Empty ones have no inscriptions. All are empty except for 1, 2, and 3. They contain the remains of Kolm the Quick, Cemor the Valiant, and Blaine (respectively). Piled unceremoniously at the foot of 4 is the jumbled skeleton of Alendus II, the last king and the tyrant overthrown by the people.

Sarcophagus 1 contains a necklace of 5,000 gp value, 2 a matched set of bracelets of 4,000 gp value and a **long sword +2**, and 3 a velvet sack of 1,000 ancient gold coins and a **hammer +3, dwarven thrower**. It is unlikely that the characters will desecrate the tombs by taking these items; if they do, take note of this action.

The Inner Circle

2. Alendus Crebus. The mound is very old, as all are in the first circle. A doorway on the south side bears an inscription in the common tongue that says "Alendus Crebus, the Great and Glorious Founder of Pellham." If the party desire to enter they will find a simple coffin that holds the bones of the king, along with a sword and mace. A shield lies atop the coffin.

3. Ciron the Hearty. The doorway is uninscribed. Opening the door reveals a circular interior with a large, sealed oaken cask coated with pitch. The air is very stale and scented with hops. Opening the cask reveals a corpse floating in ale with a smile on his face.

4. Fenton the Foolish. This door is jammed badly, such that

attempts to open it are at -1 to the normal die roll. If the coffin is opened, the skeleton of Fenton, attired in a jester's costume, will be found within.

5. Heimwell the Haughty. The stone slab door is slightly ajar. Inside is a lidless stone sarcophagus. Heimwell is now a ghost (AC 0 (8); MV 9"; HD 10; hp 40; #AT 1; THACO 10; D age 10-40 years; SA magic jar; SD need silver or magical weapons to hit) that returns here to its material body's final resting place. Heimwell will NOT use his **Magic Jar** ability in this encounter.

6. Pelcolb the Pious. His mound mimics the shape of the temple in honor of his establishment of that structure. The interior is whitewashed, and symbols of all the Celtic gods abound.

7. Voltar the Victorious. The interior of Voltar's tomb is an aberration of Type I construction, in that it is totally lined with paving stones, in honor of Voltar's initiation of the Kingsway.

8. Royberno the Bloody. The tomb is tightly sealed, but may be opened. A sickly sweet smell emanates from the stained earthen floor. A moaning sound, coupled with blood dripping from the ceiling, will begin if any living creature remains in the tomb for more than three melee rounds. There is no encounter here.

9. Tornum the Terrible. This unfortunate son of Royberno has become a skeleton warrior (AC 2; MV 6"; HD 9•4; hp 50; #AT 1 at •3; THACO 10; D 1-10; SD cause fear in creatures of 5 dice or less; MR 90%). Magically bound to remain in his tomb, the opening of the door will release him. He will not pursue into the sunlight.

10. Lascron the Last. Standing within 10 feet of the door of the tomb gives a feeling of well-being. The interior is very plain, and the good feeling is much stronger. Characters entering this mound are **Blessed** (as the clerical spell) through their next encounter. This effect can only be had once by each character.

The Middle Circle

11. Karnac the Cairnlord. His name is inscribed on the door. This mound is very unstable. Any who enter and tamper with the coffin within will cause a collapse, taking 3-30 (3d10) points of damage.

12. Agneus Expander. The doorway is collapsed, but climbing to the top of the mound shows that the roof has been blasted away. Inside the tomb of the "lover of horses" is a nightmare (AC -4; MV 15"/36"; HD 6•6; hp 44; #AT 3; THACO 13; D 2-8/4-10 (2d4•2)/4-10 (2d4•2); SD opponents save vs. Spells or attack at -2 to hit and damage).

13. Loring the Lost. Although the outside of the mound is very weathered, the interior is oddly clean and dust free. A stone sarcophagus, its lid leaning against one side, looks like the stone cutters have just left it. Obviously, this tomb has never been used.

14. Marcus the Marshal. Outside, above the door, are four deep depressions in the soil above the door, arranged in a diamond shape. These were the positions of the four stones mentioned in Loring's song, but the Galeb duhr at mound 20 has removed them. The interior of the mound is unremarkable.

15. Suradel the Scholar. Suradel was the first king to dabble in the black arts, thus the references to his being a scholar and the first of the Witchkings. Unknown to his subjects, Suradel was cursed with vampirism after his death.

The tomb's door is closed, but opens easily. The coffin inside is a simple wooden box; its lid is unlatched. Upon opening it, the vampire (AC 1; MV 12"/18"; HD 8•3; hp 35; #AT 1; THACO 12; D 1-6•4; SA **Energy Drain, Charm** (save at -2); SD •1 or better weapons to hit; SD regenerate 3 hp per round, **Assume Gaseous Form, Sleep, Hold**, and **Charm** have no effect) will try to **Charm** the nearest target. Suradel will assume gaseous form to leave the coffin, then rematerialize and attack.

16. Argunth Elf-friend. Loring did not mention which elves Argunth dealt with; unfortunately they were drow. There are ten drow (AC 4; MV 12"; F 2; hp 9 each; #AT 2 (one at •1); THACO 20; D 1-4 (dagger) or 1-6 (short sword) or 1-3 • save vs. Poison at -4 (crossbow); SA **Dancing Lights, Faerie Fire, Darkness**; SD •2 to all saves; MR 50%) in the tomb, which is a secret gateway to one of their underground cities.

17. Rikar the Roarer. The seal on this tomb is still intact; even grave robbers respect Rikar, a gifted king slain early in his reign. Inside are two sarcophaguses, one for Rikar and the other containing the skeleton of the Lady Lara, Rikar's wife who died of grief over the death of her lord.

The Outer Circle

18. Lightmal the Dark. The stone door lies on the ground and the interior is black. Inside Lightmal is "awake for all time," as he is a spectre (AC 2; MV 15"/30"; HD 7•3; hp 35; #AT 1; THACO 13; D 1-8; SA **Energy Drain**; SD •1 or better weapons to hit, unaffected by **Sleep, Charm, Hold** or cold-based spells).

19. Dalenial the Light. Dalenial was as good as his father Lightmal was evil. On his deathbed Lightmal cursed Dalenial, and though the latter succeeded his father to the throne, his father's curse withered him and his reign was short. The coffin holds only dust, rather than bones, but if a handful of it is thrown at Lightmal the spectre will be blasted from this plane. Anyone tampering with the dust must save vs. Spells or receive the appropriate **Suggestion**.

20. Llywelyn the Just. This tomb is the party's goal. There is a large group of boulders atop the mound. One of these is a Galeb duhr (AC -2; MV 6"; HD 9; hp 42; #AT 2; THACO 12; D 3-18; SA cast **Move Earth, Passwall, Wall of Stone, Stone Shape** or **Transmute Rock to Mud** once per round as L20 magic-user, **Animate Boulders**; SD unharmed by lightning or normal fire, save at

+4 vs. Magical Fire; takes double damage from cold-based attacks and saves at -4 vs. cold attacks). It takes great umbrage at anyone invading its territory.

The Galeb duhr will attack by animating the boulders atop the mound to roll down on the party. One boulder is animated per round (AC -2; MV 3"; HD 9; hp 35 each; #AT 1; THACO 12; D 4d6). After two such attacks, the Galub duhr will move in. The Galeb duhr won't use its spells here or animate boulders for melee.

Once this creature is dealt with, the party may approach the tomb. Anyone touching the doorway takes 10 points of electrical damage and the following phrase appears on the stone, "Beware the Wards of Ishcabeble!" The wards extend to the walls of the mound and underground as well; they cannot be breached at this time.

Tournament note: The character with the highest intelligence will remember the mage Ishcabeble, and the round ends.

21. Logar the Loved. The tomb is unremarkable except for a shepherd's crook incised into the door. This is a clue, taken from Loring's song, to aid in orienting the party.

22. Damocles the Wizard. He is named second of the Witchkings for his interest in magic, not always for the cause of good. Any character of good alignment can almost smell the evilness. Damocles attempted to become a lich and failed. The coffin holds his skeletal remains, draped in robes marked with arcane symbols. The coffin itself is crudely painted with similar markings.

23. Rotkoddam the Strong. The mound's portal stands open, and broken rocks (one resembling a rabbit) litter the ground before it. A strong, musky odor comes from the mound. Rotkoddam's tomb is now the lair of a gorgon (AC 2; MV 12"; HD 8; hp 40; #AT 1; THACO 12; D 2-12; SA breath turns to stone). It will attack if anyone comes within 20 feet of the doorway.

24. Claudius the Cautious. Claudius was a prudent, if not paranoid, ruler and his burial specifications reflect this. He is entombed within a coffin within a coffin within a coffin, and so on. Ten boxes must be opened to find his remains.

25. Dacquiri the Witchking. Dacquiri carried his studies of magic to an extremely high level. Unlike Damocles, he was successful in his efforts to become a lich. However, he and Ishcabeble destroyed each other, so this tomb is empty.

The Undead Army

Once a day an army invades Dolmen Moor. It is composed of:

headless horseman wraith (AC 4; MV 15"; HD 5*3; hp 28; #AT 1; THACO 15; D 1-6; SA **Energy Drain** SD silver or magic weapons to hit, immune to **Sleep, Charm, Hold,** and cold-based spells)

8 ghouls (AC 6; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 8 each; #AT 3; THACO 16; D 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA paralyzation; SD immune to **Sleep** and **Charm**)

18 zombies (AC 8; MV 6"; HD 2; hp 7 each; #AT 1; THACO 16; D 1-8; SD immune to **Sleep, Charm, Hold,** and cold-based spells)

24 skeletons (AC 7; MV 12"; HD 1; hp 4 each; #AT 1; THACO 19; D 1-6; SD take half damage from sharp and/or edged weapons, immune to **Sleep, Charm, Hold,** and cold-based spells)

The wraith is mounted on a heavy war horse (AC 2 (barded); MV 15"; HD 3*3; hp 18; #AT 3; THACO 16; D 1-8/1-8/1-3).

The wraith is headless, hence its name, The Headless Horseman of Dolmen Moor. Living beings are its prey, for it may not go to Arawn's hall without a head. The Undead Army are commanded by the wraith, so they cannot be turned unless the wraith is. If the wraith is turned, the following will go with it: 6 ghouls, 8 zombies, and 12 skeletons. Those remaining are subject to further attempts. The Undead will not pursue into the mounds.

The Lineage of Kings

I sing for you now of the lineage of kings,
Of Pellham's mighty and doddering
Fools that japed and when all were done
Proved worthless at best, all save one.

Alendus Crebus, first of the kings,
First of nine by his conquerings.
Ciron the Hearty, lover of ale,
Son of Crebus, he drinks in death still.

Fenton the Foolish, moron well-named,
Glutton of mutton, third fool of the famed.
Heimwell the Haughty, brother of Ciron,
The fourth he became by the slaying of Fenton.

Pelcolb the Pious, bastard of Fenton,
Builder of the Temple, fifth one in.
Voltar the Victorious, paver of Kingsway,
Grandson of Crebus, so they all say.

Royberno the Bloody, bastard of Voltar,
Grim destroyer of clansmen, seventh so far.
Tornum the Terrible, tormentor of souls,
Grim as his father, eight bake in the coals.

Lascron the Last, ninth of nine,
Father to no man, last of the line.
Karnac the Gauntlord, usurper maligned,
Lascron's cousin, mover of the nine.

Agneus Expander, true lover of horses,
Sibling of Karnac, the nine were of course his.
Loring the Lost, foul slayer of eight,
Third of the kings, but victim of fate.

Loring the Lost, known for his songs,
Plays minstrel to demons, as cursed by his wrongs.
Marcus the Marshall, of this line is fourth,
Four stones mark his cairn, pink ones, of course.

Suradel the Scholar, first of the Witchkings,
Son of the bard and prophet of many things.
Argunth Elf-friend, of this line is sixth,
Feared slayer of orc-hosts who none trifled with.

Rikar the Roarer, seventh of seven,
Slain young in battle, first one to heaven.
Lightmal the Dark, first of his line,
Cousin of Rikar, awake for all time.

Dalemal the Light, Black Lightmal's spawn,
Cursed by his father, he's withered and gone.
Llywelyn the Just, slain at his dinner,
Gem of all kings, he was no sinner.

Logar the Loved, a shepherd in youth,
Llywelyn's son grew ancient in truth.
Damocles the Wizard, grandson of Llywelyn,
Second of the Witchkings, Time was the villain.

Rotkoddam the Strong, sixth of the line,
Led his troops into battle, led from behind.
Claudius the Cautious, Rot's son and heir,
Died in his sleep, though none seemed to care.

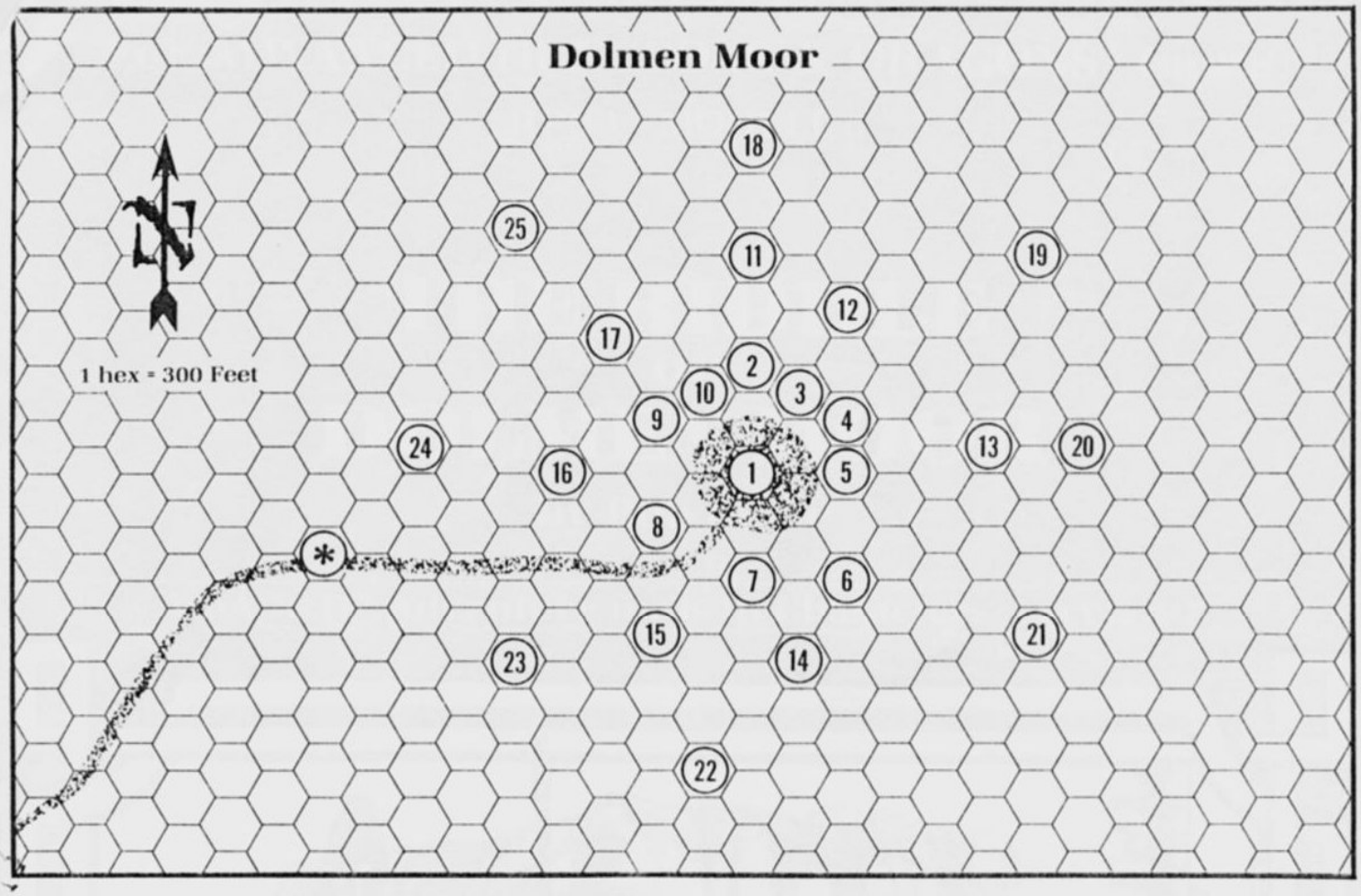
Dacquiri the Witchking, eighth of nine,
Slew Ishcabeble, died the same time.
Kohn the Quick, first of the four,
Fought without weapons, died at the door.

Cemor the Valiant, kept up the bard's quest,
Tried as he might, but finished second best.
Dwarven Blaine Shortshanks for Cemor went on,
Third quester and king was merely Time's pawn.

Alendus the Second, rogue liar and cheat,
The kingdom he destroyed lies at our feet.
Two hundred years have passed us hence,
And foolish rhymes sometimes make sense.

That is the lineage of Pellham's kings,
Fools, knaves and charlatans, blackguards and thieves.
But the price of the telling's an awful demand,
Hark to the wage the fiddler commands!

For now it is finished, my song is complete,
Your binding has ended, but you must be fleet,
For the third time you hear the name of me,
The third time is when they will come for thee.


Dolmen Moor
1 hex = 300 Feet
N
1
2
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4
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8
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10
11
12
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14
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16
17
18
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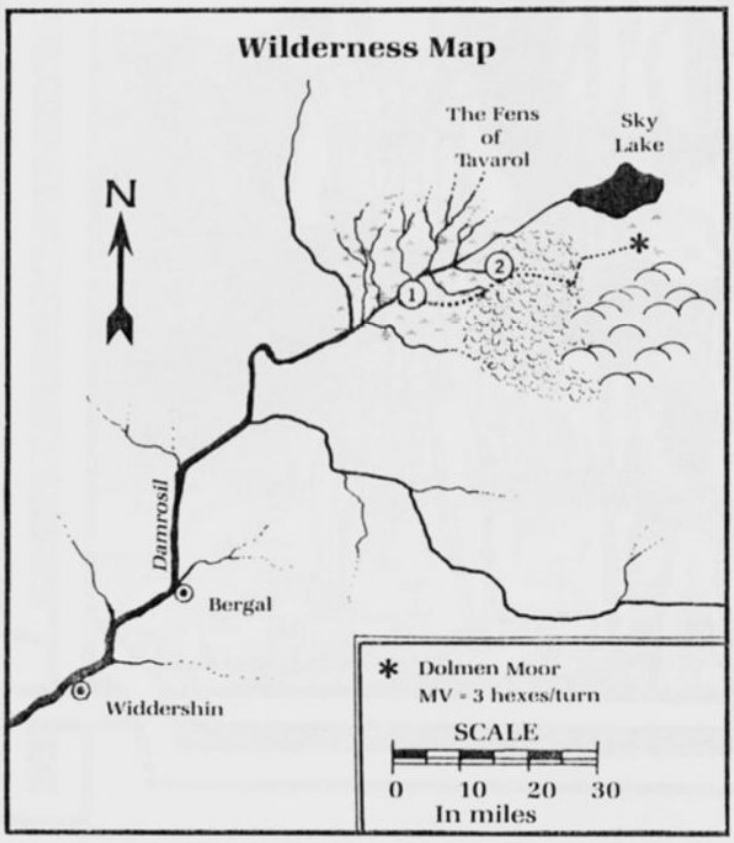
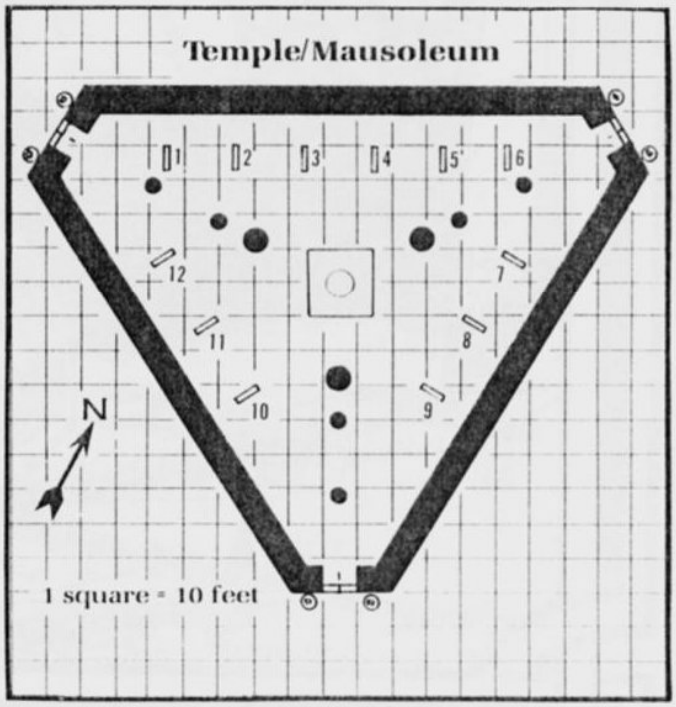
25
*


Wilderness Map
N
The Fens of Tavarol
Sky Lake
1
2
Damrosil
Bergal
Widdershin
* Dolmen Moor
MV = 3 hexes/turn
SCALE
0 10 20 30
In miles


Temple/Mausoleum
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
N
1 square = 10 feet

TOURNAMENT CHARACTERS FROM GEN CON® XVI CONVENTION

CHAR	Lyman	Silevran	Jenelle	Tremblaine	Arwyn	Brutelle	Dugal McVey	Ringo	Glynnis	Berta
NUMBER	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
RACE	H	E	H	1/2E	1/2E	H	H	Dw	H	H
SEX	M	F	F	M	M	F	M	M	F	F
Cls/Lvl	M6	M5	C6	C4	Dr4	F6	Rngr 6	T6	Bd 5/5/3	Mk6
HT	5' 11"	4' 8"	5'8"	5'4"	5' 5"	6'	6' 3"	4'	5' 10"	6'
WT	150 lbs.	80 lbs.	125 lbs.	110 lbs.	115 lbs.	140 lbs.	180 lbs.	150 lbs.	125 lbs.	150 lbs.
AL	LN	CG	N	LG	N	LG	NG	NG	LN	LG
HP	28	25	39	22	30	47	46	32	35	22
MV	12"	12"	12"	9"	12"	12"	12"	9"	12"	20"
STR	9	11	10	14	13	17	17	12	16	15
INT	17	18	11	9	10	9	13	10	12	10
WIS	10	10	16	17	15	11	15	11	15	15
DEX	15	16	14	16	14	15	16	17	17	16
CON	15	16	15	14	16	15	15	15	14	14
CHR	12	17	18	12	16	15	13	11	16	11
SAVING THROWS*										
PARALYSIS	13	12	9	9	7	11	11	8	11	12
PETRIFY	11	11	12	12	10	12	12	11	11	11
RODS	9	9	13	13	11	13	13	8	12	11
BREATH	13	13	15	15	13	13	13	15	13	15
SPELLS	10	10	14	14	12	14	14	9	13	13
ARMOR	Bracers	None	Chain & shield	Scale & shield	Leather	Chain	Ring & shield	Leather	Leather	None
ATTACK ADJ	0	0	0	0	0	+1	+1	0	0	0
DAMAGE ADJ	0	0	0	0	0	+1	+1	0	+1	0
MISSILE ADJ	0	+1	0	+1	0	0	+1	+2	+2	0
OPEN DOORS	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-3	1-3	1-2	1-3	1-2
BEND BARS	1%	2%	2%	7%	4%	13%	13%	4%	10%	7%

THIEVING ABILITIES	Pick Pockets	Open Locks	Find/ Remove Traps	Move Silently	Hide in Shadows	Hear Noise	Climb Walls	Read Language
Ringo	60%	67%	60%	52%	42%	20%	82%	25%
Glynnis	55%	52%	40%	45%	36%	20%	90%	25%
Berta	—	52%	45%	47%	37%	20%	92%	—

*Ringo's CON bonus included. Arwen's **cloak** bonus included.

CHARACTERS' EQUIPMENT

Character	Weapons	Magical Items	Equipment
Lyman	Dagger	**bracers of defense AC 5,** potion of **fire resistance,** scroll (at L7): **dispel magic, extention I**	dagger, 2 oil flasks, 50' rope, rations, 50 gp, spell books, components
Silevran	Q. staff darts	**ring of protection +2,** potion of **healing, wand of lightning** (8 charges)	q. staff, 12 darts, backpack, 50' rope, 2 water flasks, rations, 5 ep, spell books, components
Jenelle	Mace, hammer	**hammer +1, chainmail +1,** potion of **extra-healing**	mace, 2 hammers, shield, holy symbol, pray beads, lantern, 5 oil flasks, silver, mirror, 30 gp, components
Tremblaine	Q. staff, mace	**mace +1, shield +1,** potion of **extra-healing**	mace, q. staff, scale mail, wolfsbane, extra trousers, rations, 20 gp gem, components
Arwyn	Spear, sling,	**spear +2, cloak of protection +2, dust of appearance** (1)	spear, sling, leather armor, sandals, silver bowl, rations, components
Brutelle	Battle ax, longsword	**longsword +1 chainmail +2, boots of levitation**	battle ax, 2 hand axes, longsword, 6 torches, tinderbox, backpack, 3 iron spikes, rations, 35 sp
Dugal	Broad-sword hand ax, shortbow, dagger	**broad-sword +1,** 3 **arrows +2, ring mail +1, shield +1**	broadsword, hand ax, 2 daggers, shortbow, quiver/20 arrows, 3 torches, tinderbox, cloak, rations
Ringo	Short sword, club dagger	**net of entrapment,** potion of **healing**	short sword, club, dagger, leather armor, thieves' tools, large sack, 50' rope, extra robes, rations, 30 gp gem
Glynnis	Long-sword, javelin, daggers, sling	**longsword +1, leather armor +2, Fouchlucan bandore**	2 javelins, dagger, sling, 5 sling bullets, theives' tools, 2 song books, rations, 4 × 15 gp gems, components
Berta	Club, jo stick, dagger	**necklace of missiles** (5-3-3)	club, jo stick, 2 daggers, thieves' tools, extra pants, rations

SPELL LIST

Magic-users

First Level	Second Level	Third Level
Affect Normal Fires	Continual Light	Blink
Burning Hands	Detect Invisible	Dispel Magic
Dancing Lights	Invisibility	Feign Death
Detect Magic	Knock	Fireball
Feather Fall	Levitate	Flame Arrow
Hold Portal	Magic Mouth	Gust of Wind
Magic Missile	Shatter	Hold Person
Push	Wizard Lock	Prot/Norm Missiles
Read Magic		Lightning Bolt
Shield		Water Breathing
Shocking Grasp		
Sleep		
Spider Climb		

Clerics

First Level	Second Level	Third Level
Bless	Chant	Create Food and Water
Command	Detect Charm	Cure Blindness
Create Water	Find Traps	Cure Disease
Cure Light Wounds	Hold Person	Dispel Magic
Detect Evil	Resist Fire	Feign Death
Detect Magic	Silence 15'r.	Prayer
Light	Slow poison	
Prot/Evil	Snake Charm	
Purify Food/Drink	Spiritual Hammer	
Remove Fear		
Resist Cold		
Sanctuary		

Druid/Bard

First Level	Second Level	Third Level
Detect Magic	Barkskin	Call Lightning
Detect Snares/Pits	Create Water	Cure Disease
Entangle	Cure Light Wounds	Hold Animal
Faerie Fire	Feign Death	Neutralize Poison
Invis. to Animals	Heat Metal	Protection/Fire
Pass without Trace	Obscurement	Snare
Predict Weather	Produce Flame	Tree
Purify Water	Trip	Water Breathing
Shillelagh	Warp Wood	
Speak with Animals		

MODULE CREDITS

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Boredom

Players, has gaming night begun to look like the illustration at left? DMs, are you frustrated with how your campaign is (or is not) progressing? Boredom can destroy an otherwise good campaign. Read on and find out how to prevent it from killing yours.

by Kim Eastland

Boredom is one of the deadliest enemies of the role-playing game. Players may simply avoid games or GMs that bore them, but it's a different matter for a GM. After months of preparation, playing, and development of the world and the player characters, he notices (if he's lucky) that the games are bogging down, and the players beginning to yawn or not show up at all. More often than not, this is a turning point in a campaign and determines whether a "world" succeeds or not.

For a struggling gamemaster the first and most important step to rectifying the problem is to quickly identify the problem. If you're the GM, take an honest look at your campaign and yourself as its guiding force. You could ask the players for their advice, but they may not be any more enlightened on the problem than you are. You may also be opening yourself up for further problems if the players interpret your questions as a sign of weakness or lack of control over the campaign.

It might help to identify the most common causes of a boring campaign. The following is a list, in no particular order, of some factors that can help to make a campaign a real "yawner."

A good ref doesn't need to memorize all the rules, but he should know where they can be located.

1. Impossible odds. Is your campaign geared for levels higher than your player characters' abilities? There's nothing more frustrating than getting creamed time after time. Try adjusting the monsters, magic, etc., down so the party has a fighting chance.

2. Monty Haul worlds. This is the exact opposite of the Impossible Odds problem. Are your monsters, magic, etc., geared too low for the party? Trashing tribes of orcs or squads of robotic adversaries may be fun occasionally but grows dull quickly. The GM should also keep track of magical or technological items given to party members. Don't be too niggardly in supplies and treasure or you may unfairly tip the balance in favor of the non-player characters, but don't splurge on goodies either. One of the worst worlds I adventured in was one of the richest (you could buy *anything* for a price, artifacts and all). Remember, once you start escalating in power it's *very* difficult to stop. The inability to balance items, skills, and power has led to the destruction of innumerable campaigns.

3. Long-winded GMs. Many GMs will spend long hours developing a campaign or a module for play. Every room or landscape is written down to the most minute detail. When the party happens into that area, he feels compelled to share his visions with them — in glowing detail — whether they want them or not. The players aren't allowed to take quick peeks or briefly scan an area — frustrating to say the least. Make sure you don't swamp your players with poetry.

4. Unprepared GMs. The antithesis of the over-prepared referee is one who is constantly winging it because he feels no pre-game work is necessary on his part. This can give the game a feeling of vertigo, and generally deprives the players of something to sink their teeth into; the "world" often lacks a sense of reality. A good ref doesn't need to memorize all the rules, but he should know where they can be located. You may wish to divide your world by geographic location into modules for the sake of playing areas, so you are never caught unprepared.

5. Random encounters GM. This concept is closely associated with the ill-prepared gamemaster. Do you roll up the targeted area and encounters randomly? This can give your dungeon, space station, or crime headquarters all the logic of a chaotic roulette wheel.

6. Map-crazed GMs or players. No game should be constantly bogged down by mapping. Worst of all are "creative" building plans that are full of curly-q's, weird angles, or just generally Rubic-Cubic in design. Mapping is an aid to adventuring and should be simple and quick; it is not an end unto itself.

7. Overly creative GMs. This one may come as a bit of a surprise. How can any referee be overly creative? To begin with, one has to look at the nature of RPGs and the desires of RPG players. The average player wants to gain knowledge of his character's world. This is very difficult if the referee is constantly pitching curve balls at him. The vast majority of RPGs on the market are well-balanced and designed for repeated use. Orcs, robots, and gunmen are usually balanced and included for continual use, not a one-shot appearance. Players don't really care for campaigns where they constantly get jumped by unknown monsters or old familiars who behave inconsistently. Some innovation is fun, constant unknowns are just plain chaotic.

8. The "stuck-in-a-rut" campaign. Possibly the most common cause of boredom is the once entertaining campaign that now goes nowhere. Reasons for this may include: the GM has little time for developing his campaign and a sort of "comfortable" pattern (boredom) sets in among the GM and players after innumerable adventures into the same old dungeon, city, or against the same opposition; PCs have reached a plateau on a particular quest; or just a general lack of innovation. If ignored by the GM, players will start drifting off in search of new and exciting experiences, even though the potential was in the existing setting to progress further, but the players were not enticed to. Do *you* like doing the same old thing day after day, whether it's going to work, school, or whatever? Of course not! The answer to this problem is a new "mind-set": refocus your attention and campaign from time to time on unusual experiences, locales, missions, and the like.

Whether you're a player or GM, you can benefit from defining a few key concepts:

Fairness: A referee's job is not to punish the players or to hand them the world on a silver platter. His job is to see that they get a fair break in the campaign world.

Logic: A referee's game world should have some logic and consistency in it that the players can depend on.

Movement: Keep the adventure, and the campaign, moving. Extensive mapping, shopping trips, etc., should be discouraged. It's up to the GM to keep the players awake.

Preparation: The referee is responsible for information on most "normal" topics should the players have questions concerning the world. He needn't always have it memorized, but he should know where to find it quickly.

Innovation: The key to a long-lasting campaign is to keep it interesting, inspired, and imaginative. This can be supplied by researching areas that pertain to the game.

Balance: A referee's most difficult task is balancing the different aspects of a role-playing game. This can only be accomplished by being sensitive to all of the aforementioned topics.

The key to solving many of the above situations is research. Although research as a concept is an entirely different subject (and article following this one), if you expose yourself to new ideas for inspiration and imagination, your game will also become more inspired and imaginative, which can prevent the players and GM from becoming bored.

Research
is not a dirty word

by Kim Eastland

Doing research to add excitement to your role-playing game campaign doesn't require the patience of Job, the brain of Einstein, or the endurance of a marathon runner if you know where to look. Here are some "eye-opening" suggestions (you won't need to use your hands, either).

Where do you go for new ideas? If you're running a campaign that's beginning to get a little boring, refereeing a game for players who play a lot and crave innovative scenarios, or just want a change of pace, the answer is research.

Before you quickly move on to another article, let me assure you that research need not consume vast quantities of time and effort IF you know where to look.

Following is a list of various sources for inspiration. My own comments on various books, periodicals, etc., can sometimes be found in parentheses following the date of publication. An asterisk indicates the particular item listed may contain subject matter which, either because of content or style, may not be deemed suitable for more sensitive individuals. Please note that these are MY suggestions and don't necessarily reflect the opinion or policy of any other individual, organization, or corporation.

Fantasy books, illustrated

Manguel and Guadalupi. *The Dictionary of Imaginary Places.* Macmillan Publishing, 1980.
(A wonderously large book filled with maps and descriptions of most major literary imaginative lands.)

Mode, Heinz. *Fabulous Beasts and Demons.* London: Phaidon Press), 1974.
(Great collection of historic and mythological monsters.)

Arrowsmith and Moorse. *A Field Guide to the Little People.* Wallaby Pocket Books, 1977.
("Being a guide to the lineage, appearance, general characteristics, and case histories of 79 species who pull the gossamer strings of the Universe. . . .")

Poortvielt and Huygens. *Gnomes.* Abrams Books, or Peacock Press/Bantam Books, 1977.

Poortvielt and Huygens. *Secrets of the Gnomes.* Abrams Books, 1982.
(Both Gnome books are rich in myth and fantasy texture.)

Froud and Lee. *Faeries.* Abrams Books, 1978.
(A marvelous collection of Faerie folklore with the best artwork in this series.)

Heller, Scrace, Wijngaard, and Larkin. *Giants.* Abrams Books, 1979.
(An informative look at our oversized foes and the folklore surrounding them.)

*Jong, Erica, and Joseph A. Smith. *Witches.* Abrams Books, 1981.
(A mature look at the historical and mythological witch.)

Walsh, Robb, and David Wenzel. *Kingdom of the Dwarves.* Centaur Books, 1980.
(I cannot recommend this book highly enough. The story of a supposed English "archeological dig" brings up many facets of the dwarvish community never dreamed of. Excellent artwork.)

Chant, Joy. *The High Kings: Arthur's Celtic Ancestors.* Bantam Books, 1983.
(A collection of Celtic folklore as told by their bards. Great sources for legends in your campaign world.)

Brown, R. Allen. *Castles: A History & Guide.* Blandford Press (Dorset), 1980.
(Contents include castle-building, castle construction, defense and attack, life in the castle, etc. Over 200 photographs in color and black and white.)

Osprey Men-At-Arms Series. London: Osprey Publishing.
(This is a series of medium-sized paperbound books which cover the history, uniforms, tactics, etc., of numerous armies and warrior races. Perfect for getting a handle on actual armor, color schemes, etc., that can be used in a campaign or for painting miniatures.)
Particular volumes of interest include:

#50: Medieval European Armies, 1300-1500
#58: The Landsknechts
#75: Armies of the Crusades
#85: Saxon, Viking, and Norman
#86: Samurai Armies, 1550-1615 (for refs with Eastern campaigns.)
#94: The Swiss at War, 1300-1500
#99: Medieval Heraldry
#111: The Armies of Crecy & Poitiers
#113: The Armie Agincourt

Fantasy, illustrated periodicals, and comic books

Pini, Wendy and Richard. *Elfquest Comics.* Warp Graphics.
(Also hardback books and misc. publications. Extraordinary fantasy atmosphere in this small series about a group of wolf-riding elves trying to find their origins.)

Aragone, Sergio. *Groo the Wanderer.* Pacific Comics.
(Super spoof on the "typical" barbarian scenarios. Even if you can't use anything in it for your game it's a blast to read.)

Epic Illustrated: The Marvel Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction. Marvel.
(Extremely wide range of all types of highly imaginative illustrated literature.)

Skeates and Wenzel. *Warlords.*

DC Graphic Novel No. 2.
(High quality one-shot comic about brothers who are trying to gain control of the fantasy realms held by one another. Good use of magic in the storyline.)

Fantasy resources, misc.

Blum, Ralph. *The Book Of Runes*. St. Martin's Press, 1982.
(Excellent study of the ancient art of scrying by runes. Comes with book, bag, and runes for entertaining attempts at the eldritch forecasting.)

Science-fiction books, illustrated

Barlowe, Wayne D., and Ian Summers. *Barlowe's Guide to the Extra-Terrestrials*. Workman Publishing, 1979.
(One of the finest collections of alien life form descriptions gleaned from major science-fiction works. Complete with comparative size chart and a format that gives the impression of an authoritative textbook on actual life forms.)

Dixon, Dougal. *After Man: A Zoology of the Future*. St. Martins Press, 1981.
(An incredible book speculating on future fauna on Earth after Man has disappeared from its surface. Fantastic for populating SF worlds with weird animals that aren't technically monsters.)

Wingrove, David. *The Immortals of Science Fiction*. Mayflower Books, 1980.
(A collection of passages from famous SF works by the masters in the field, complete with illustrations of the passages.)

Science fiction, illustrated novels

Delaney, Samuel and Howard Chaykin. *Empire*. Byron Preiss Visual Publications, 1978.
(Full color paperbound publication that is somewhat akin to a super comic book. Great story line and marvelous settings, costumes, and gadgets; the computer programmed returning Drone Daggers were my favorites in past games. Useful for creating new civilizations.)

Bester, Alfred, and Howard Chaykin. *The Stars, My Destination*. Byron Preiss Visual Publications, 1979.
(An excellent visual adaption of the first part of Bester's novel. Excellent for imagery of an advanced society, but most useful for its concept of Jaunte movement.)

Science-fiction comic books

*Chaykin, Howard. *American Flag*. First Comics.
(Possibly the first truly mature look at a science-fiction society on Earth. Knockout storylines, concepts, and technology. Reuben Flagg, a sort of futuristic Ranger, fits perfectly into a number of SF games.)

*Chaykin, Howard. *Cody Starbuck Comic*. Star Reach Publication.
(Plus back issues of Star Reach Comics featuring Cody Starbuck. Chaykin's starfaring privateer combines swashbuckling bravado with high tech items.)

Truman, Tim. *Starslayer*. First Comics.
(Our old TSR buddy Tim Truman is in the comic book field. Take a look at his *Starslayer* and back-up feature, *Grimjack*, for ideas on other worlds' cultures and ship-to-ship combat situations.)

Judge Dredd. England: Eagle Comics.
(Post-holocaust Earth with its mega-cities, Moon colony, and law-keeping judges provide a great wealth of imagery for all types of SF RPG s.)

Fantasy and Science-fiction, artbooks

Whelan, Michael. *Wonderworks*. Donning, 1979.

Sorcerers: A Collection of Fantasy Art. Ariel Books/Ballantine Books, 1978.

The New Visions: A Collection of Modern Science Fiction Art. Doubleday &Co., 1982.

*Achilleos, Chris. *Beauty and the Beast*. Fireside Book, Simon & Schuster, 1978.

Jones, Peter. *Solar Wind*. Perigree Books, 1980.

Tomorrow and Beyond: Masterpieces of Science Fiction Art. Workman Publishing, 1978.

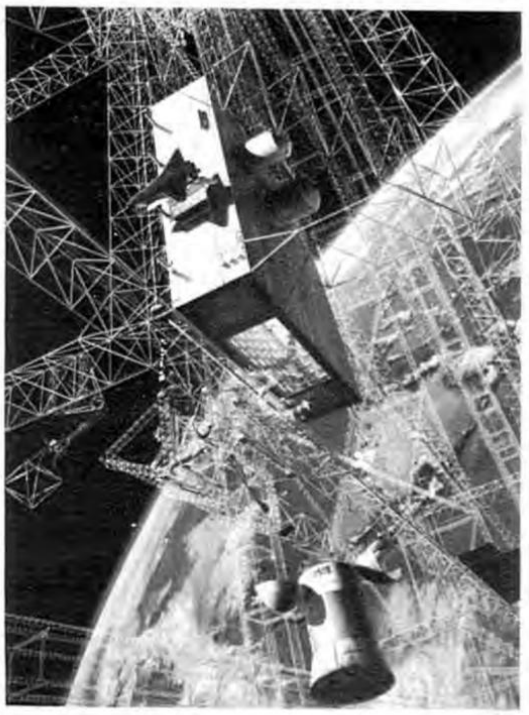
Morrill, Rowena. *The Fantastic Art of Rowena*. Pocket Books, 1983.
(The newest of the *Fantastic Art of . . .* series features some extremely inspired and recognizable SF and fantasy art.)

Although these are examples of specific works in a highly limited genre there is a great abundance of material all around you. Go to your local library and look in the card files under Fantasy, Science Fiction, and Science, or look in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature for past articles on subjects like lasers, space flight, etc.

Specific magazines, such as *Science Digest, Discover, Scientific American, Science News, Smithsonian,* or *Astronomy* also hold information that you can extract to create fantastic worlds.

Photo session

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NASA



This is an orbiting space platform under construction. From this photo, let's determine that: a) the player characters are in transit from their last adventure, b) they are in an isolated situation with only their wits and comraderie to rely on and, c) this is a relatively defenseless installation. Having established that, let's have a small squad of Sathar in a highjacked shuttle try to board the platform. The Sathar send one of their number out on the struts to destroy the communications apparatus and storm the center, expecting passive resistance from scientists, not fearsome combatants.

A fight inside would be interesting, but not nearly as thrilling as a chase out on the struts (the Sathar planned on blowing this unit up as a prelude to an invasion). The Sathar on the struts is wearing a completely maneuverable deep space suit; the player characters from the station have suits which allow them to breathe outside, but are really designed to be used when merely fixing something outside. Tell the player characters to start climbing.

Useful information is all around you waiting to be gleaned. Let me give you an example for a STAR FRONTIERS® game campaign that is bogging down, perhaps because the players and referee have been gaming "in the city" for too long. The photos on these pages are NASA photos, the type that pop up constantly in magazines.

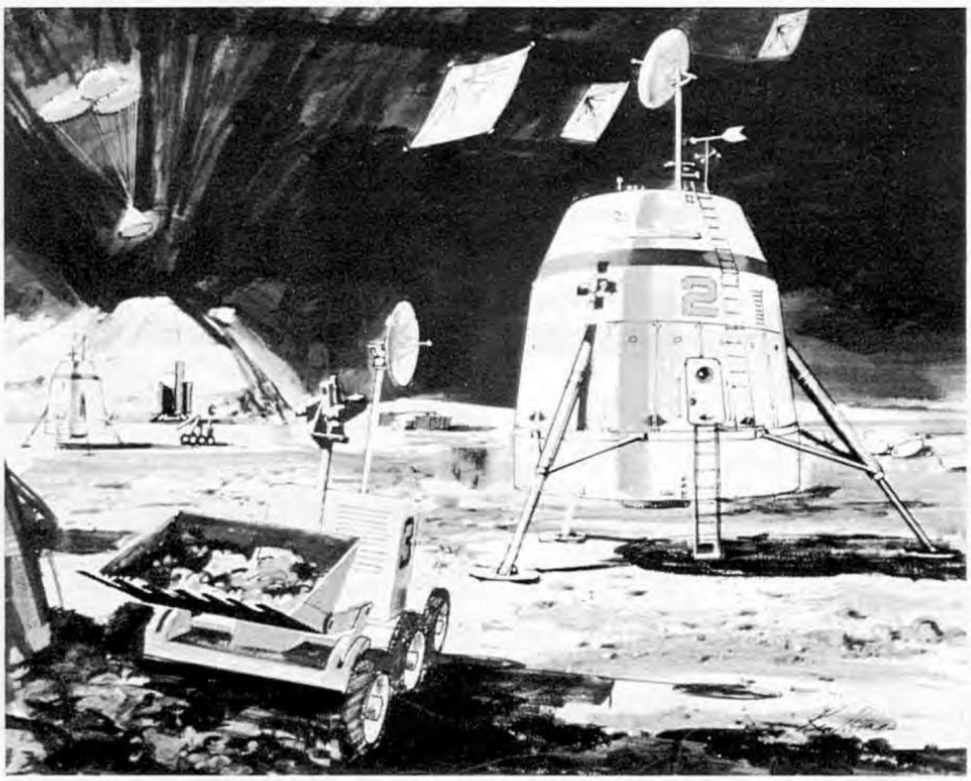
Fantasy games don't always have to take place in dungeons. That's why so many aquatic and other creatures exist.

Plan adventures that take place on other planes. A major theft from a winter fortress of Frost Giants and White Dragons, in the dead of winter, when no one would expect you (quite a bit of planning on that one) might be fun, or go on a mapping survey party as protection from hostile creatures (the reward of a good map of the area could be reason enough to take the job).

The geography of your own area might supply you with suitable material for adventures. Go to a local forest preserve or large park and decide where you would build your keep if you were an evil magic-user, then transfer it to paper. There are potential adventures all around you.

This illustration is a NASA Lunar Roving Vehicle, featuring an Elastic Loop Mobility System or ELMS (note the rubber band-like treads.) This will allow the vehicle to traverse difficult terrain, such as desert. Though this is a two-man model let's enlarge it to hold 15 creatures. You can assign different capabilities to the different appendages on the vehicle; it can be heavily armed or slanted toward scientific exploration.

For the sake of this article, let's say it's a peaceful operation, and your group is onboard as a team of observers for Pan-Galactic (assigned, just in case). In the middle of the night one of scientists is murdered, and you have to find out who did it before you return to base ("Murder on the Lunar Express"). You could create exciting encounters which help the characters find clues, a really unique adventure which challenges the players at the same time (just remember to keep it solvable).



In this illustration, assume that after attack on your passenger liner by pirate ships, your little group has managed to secure an escape cone and made your way to nearby Delavan 3, a robotic mining colony excavating rare minerals for Pan Galactic. You reckon the pirate base is nearby and will send out a party to capture you in a week or so. Rather than wait for the inevitable, you decide to attack their base in the hopes of swiping a swift vessel, and possibly destroying their operations in the process. The atmosphere is good, the daylight only one hour out of eight, and the magnetic interference such that scanners, communications equipment, and sensors all work at extremely limited range. Can the party, in control of a couple of robotic vehicles and a handful of stocky robo-miners, achieve its objectives? As GM, you might try lessening the gravity for a real fun time (attacking in 20′ strides?).

MONTY HAUL
and the
GERMAN HIGH COMMAND

by James M. Ward

Nary a gamer exists who hasn't used, or at least heard, the term "Monty Haul." If you've ever wondered where the term originated, here's your answer. The Monty Haul series of articles first appeared in THE DRAGON® Magazine (remember when it was called that?) in May (issue #14) of 1978. This particular article was the second in the series (issue #15, June, 1978), and is presented in its original form, with just a tiny bit of plastic surgery to hide its age. The names have been changed to protect the innocent . . . ah, you know the rest.

It was Tuesday night, our weekly "anything goes" night. We all went to Robert's house for the game, which Monty was going to run; he was being very secretive about it, too. We filtered in one or two at a time until nine of us were there. The Tractics boys, Dave, Tim, and Brian, were all clumped together talking about something called "Cham-bowi" armor (it sounded something like that) and I was just going over to see if I could incorporate it into my medieval campaign game when Monty started setting up the ping-pong table and Robert brought out the soda pop and food. Most everyone went over to help Monty, but I went over to help Robert — my first tactical error of the night.

Monty told the Tractics boys and me (my mouth was too full to protest) to go into another room with our written orders. When my comrades read our WW II orders (we were the Germans), they were overjoyed: our assignment was to attack a bunch of snipers who were entrenched in a hilly area. I was less than thrilled at the prospect. I've never enjoyed playing games that use gunpowder (it's too hard to duck a bullet or cannon ball), but I usually try to put up with it with as good a grace as I can manage at the time.

We were given an armored car, four halftracks, and two kubelwagens. The list included enough men and materials to sink a pocket battleship; I waited patiently for the leftovers. My cohorts started setting up vast battle plans with three or four alternate plans. Our main attack plan was supposed to be a lightning-quick pincer movement of men and vehicles called "Goblin." I tried to point out that goblins didn't have pincers, and maybe we should call it Operation "Crabby," or perhaps "Silverfish," but they ignored me and finished writing out volumes of orders. We put Dave in charge because Tim and Brian didn't like being blamed for things (like losing); Dave was from Chicago and used to getting blamed for things.

Anyway, they gave me the armored car with the 20mm cannon and told me to guard the rear (they probably figured I couldn't do much harm back there). Tim started tooling up the dirt road with his two halftracks while Dave started up the other side of the board into a grove of trees. Brian drove up the middle a little behind Dave and Tim, and I sat back in the woods setting up what they called a wide field but what I called a good place to hide.

Then we saw the orcs. They came out in hordes from a group of rocks in the middle of the board. Monty had tricked us into thinking we were going to fight a WW II battle. Although the Tractics boys weren't pleased, I had a big grin on my face. I started roaring up the side of the board towards the orcs, anxious to tangle with the beasties, but that brought loud shouts from my teammates. They pointed out, in typical German fashion, that I had to obey orders and was to get back to where I belonged. I think that's where my mind switched from German to the common tongue.

Storming the castle?

The orcs were cut to ribbons by a cross fire from the halftracks, and those that survived ran back into the rocks, closely followed by Brian and his kubelwagens. Brian's search revealed a secret tunnel. He decided to enter it and blast anything in his path, but Tim (acting like a typical SS storm trooper) suggested that it be booby trapped to explode when it was opened. Dave and Brian thought that was a good idea, and even I had to agree (it sounded like a delayed blast *Fireball*).

It was not to be, however, because just then a 14th-level EHP jumped up and threw an *Insect Plague* at us (he was used to sneaking up on things in a typical Petal Throne* fashion). The bugs were terrible and Monty rolled two of the Germans troopers dead from bug bites. I suggested we toss a *Cloud Kill* on the bugs in the form of smoke, and that took care of the problem. No one thanked me for it.

Tim and Brian started talking about "bore-sighting" the likely hiding places and the castle on the hill, and our leader Dave said something about hedge-hopping towards the primary objective. I then realized that thinking in the common tongue made it impossible for me to understand them, so I decided to sit back in the woods to wait for more D&D® game goodies to come crawling my way out of the hills.

Looking back, I think it was the mortar fire Dave directed at the castle that caused the four storm giants to run out tossing boulders. Tim and Dave just laughed, saying that rocks couldn't hurt their armored halftracks; I backed my armored car behind some big trees anyway.

The first set of boulders crushed the front of one of Tim's units and pushed over the mortar-carrying unit of Dave's. To make matters worse, bullets (of all different calibers) didn't seem to do much to the giants. The bazooka took out one, and Brian got two others with his panzerfaust, but the remaining giant ruined one of his kubelwagens and its crew. Two hand grenades took care of the last giant, and we (or should I say the Tractics boys) started moving towards the castle at maximum speed to make ourselves tougher rock targets.

Thus far we had seen orcs from Tom, Giants from Robert, and I figured that now that we were making tracks for the castle Ernie would be raising his tricky head as a magic-user. Sure enough, he jumped from another pile of rocks as a warlock, after the German units had passed, of course. His *Fireball* took out the halftrack that Tim had repaired, and

Brian, standing at the wheel of his last kubelwagen before the strafing claw run.

three of the troopers escaped with their lives and a flame thrower. I opened up on Ernie's hiding place behind the rocks with my 20mm cannon (I now called it a *Lightning Bolt* thrower), and caused Ernie to run towards our little surprise in the secret tunnel among the other pile of rocks. We were all rewarded by a very satisfying explosion (related to us by Monty), and Ernie was supposed bits and pieces over a bunch of rocks.

Mike stepped in to tell us he was taking out his flight wing — actually a pack of manticores, but Mike speaks of everything in WW I terms. He made his monsters go over Brian's kubelwagen in a strafing claw run, ruining the thing. We (the Tractics boys and me) got him into a triple crossfire, though, and ruined it. Out of his ten uckies he was able to take one back into the castle walls. Mike was pleased with his kill ratio (numbers of any type impress him) when Brian told him that kamikaze flyers weren't invented until WW II. That got a laugh out of the rest of us, but he didn't even grin.

In the mean time, Dave's heroes and Robert's superheroes were pelting us with arrows. Little did we know that Dave was simultaneously raising Ernie for more magical help. We lost some men to the arrows, and they lost their heroes and superheroes to our return fire. We started mortaring the castle and a panzerfaust took out the front gate. With the gate gone, five trolls rushed out at our Germans. Bullets and grenades didn't do much good because the trolls regenerated too fast. It was looking real bad for us when Brian thought of using the flame thrower to burn trolls (he must have switched from German to the common tongue, too). Unfortunately, it was about this time that Tom's stupid vampire rushed my armored car. My cannon *a la Lightning Bolt* thrower did nothing to the thing, and it started charming away my men. I believe it was Dave who suggested using phosphorous grenades on the vampire. I didn't even know I had any, but, according to Monty, they sure did the job on the creature.

Soon it was all over — except for the shouting. Ernie started plastering us with spells from a castle tower; as the EHP, Dave was sending out *Aerial Servants* right and left; Robert and Tom sent mummies and ghouls; and Mike had a flight reserve of one roc that really broke the Sopwith Camel's back as far as we were concerned.

We killed a few other things, but big deal; we were chomped in the end by a magical barrage that would have turned the tide for for the Germans on D-day. Although it was a total loss for our side, I considered it a personal victory for me. Not only had my D&D® game tactics helped us out, but some of the Tractics boys' D&D game thinking had aided our cause as well, proving, at least to myself, and the few other sensible people reading this, that things of a D&D game nature are the best. . . .

If you've enjoyed this deviation from the normal POLYHEDRON™ Newszine article, look for the new adventures of Monty Haul in future issues.

* *Empire of the Petal Throne is a trademark of Zocchi Games.*

DISPEL CONFUSION

If you have Dispel Confusion *questions you'd like answered, address them to P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147, Attn: Penny Petticord.*

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

Fantasy Adventure Game

DQ: A third level magic-user is entitled to use two first level spells and one second level spell. Can the character opt to use three first level spells?
DA: No. Spellcasting characters are entitled to precisely the number and level of spells specified in the appropriate table for their class and spell. Spell levels are not interchangeable.

DQ: Could a cleric use a dagger to cut rope or something and not break religious beliefs?
DA: Of course. The restriction only applies to use of edged weapons in combat. No penalty should be applied for using a knife to perform everyday non-violent functions.

DQ: Would a thief's backstabbing bonus also apply to missile fire?
DA: No. Backstabbing is a special ability of thieves that can only be done with a melee weapon. If a thief fires a missile at a target's back, the special bonuses for a backstab attempt do not apply. The attack is treated the same as a rear attack from any other class would be. Thieves do not get double damage with missiles.

DQ: Can other characters strike "unnoticed from behind"? If so, what bonuses would they gain?
DA: Any character may occasionally have the opportunity to strike from behind, but unless the attacker is a thief whose approach has not been seen or heard, the special bonuses for hit rolls and damage do not apply.

Assuming that the attacker is not a thief, a rear attack may still be more advantageous than a front, depending on the victim. For normal rear attacks, the DM may adjust the victim's Armor Class to fit the circumstances. For example, if the victim's usual AC includes a shield, the DM may choose not to count that shield toward the victim's AC for the purposes of this particular attack, since the shield would not normally be used to protect the rear. Likewise if the victim is unaware of attackers from behind, the DM may choose to discount the dexterity bonuses on the grounds that the victim is not trying to dodge the blow. Rear attacks will inflict normal damage unless they are backstab attempts by thieves, in which case damage is doubled. In the AD&D™ game there is a standard +2 bonus for non-thieves stabbing from the rear, but no such extra bonus applies for the D&D® game.

DQ: Is the damage of a dragon's breath weapon equal to its hit points? If so, does the damage of the breath weapon decrease as the dragon's hit points decrease? Why?
DA: The damage delivered by any of the dragon breath weapons is equal to the dragon's current hit points (halved by a successful saving throw). The damage delivered decreases along with the dragon's hit point total. Therefore, a dragon will always breathe on its first attack unless circumstances prevent this, as use of the breath weapon in subsequent rounds might not be as effective. The reason for this is that as the dragon takes damage, it is no longer able to use its breath weapon as effectively due to pain, weakness, etc.

DQ: If a silver-tipped arrow is used for monsters requiring magical weapons, is there any adjustment in to hit or damage rolls?
DA: No. The usual silver-tipped arrow (or other silver-coated weapon) is not magical. Hit rolls and damage are modified only for character ability scores and any spells in effect (such as *Bless*). If the monster description states that a given creature can only be hit by magic weapons, non-magical silvered weapons will be of no use. But if it specifies magical *or* silver weapons (such as for wights and lycanthropes), either will be effective. The silvered weapons are expensive, but they are generally easier for characters to obtain than magical ones. Therefore, it is wise for a low-level party that has not yet collected many magical weapons to carry a few silver-coated ones in case these special creatures are encountered.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

Fantasy Adventure Game

ADQ: What AC do the "hands" produced by the *Bigby's Hand* spells have?
ADA: The Armor Class of the "hands" is the same as the current AC of the mage who cast the spell.

ADQ: Can the *Bigby's Hands* be hit by normal weapons?
ADA: No, magical weapons are required to hit them.

ADQ: Is the protection afforded by a *Cloak of Displacement* cumulative with armor?
ADA: Yes.

ADQ: In reference to Artifact Table V on page 223 of the *DMG*, what is Monster Summoning VIII (Prime Power letter M)?
ADA: The "VIII" is a misprint — there is no such spell. It should be Monster Summoning VII.

ADQ: Are the magical protection bonuses from a: *Cloak of Protection*, *Ring of Protection*, *Displacer Cloak*, and *Ioun stones* cumulative?
ADA: Yes, all are cumulative except the cloaks, because a creature may only wear one cloak at a time.

ADQ: What is the underwater range of a crossbow?
ADA: Maximum underwater range for a heavy crossbow is 30 feet, as in the Sahuagin monster description (*Monster Manual I*).

ADQ: If a character in chain mail wears *Boots of Elvenkind*, is the movement still silent?

ADA: No. The boots are not effective when worn with metal armor.

ADQ: If a monk whose listed AC is 2 is surprised, does the AC become 10?
ADA: No. This is a function of the monk's special training. The monk's standard AC always applies, even in surprise situations, unless the DM adjudicates otherwise.

ADQ: Which combat table do monks use, thieves' or clerics'?
ADA: Monks attack as clerics, not thieves.

ADQ: Do monks get constitution bonuses on both first level dice?
ADA: Yes. The constitution bonus is a function of hit dice, not level.

ADQ: What class is the monk treated as for certain psionic disciplines, such as *Body Weaponry, Cell Adjustment*, and *Domination?*
ADA: Treat the monk character as a thief of the same level for purposes of determining the effects.

ADQ: How much money does a multi-classed character start with?
ADA: A multi-classed character is entitled to the total starting cash for all professed classes combined.

ADQ: When viewing a nymph, are the saving throws vs. Death or Spells?
ADA: Against the death result, the victim must make a saving throw vs. Death. Against the blindness effect, the victim must save vs. Spells.

ADQ: What kind of attack do piercers have after they land? What is the damage for the succeeding rounds after a successful first attack?
ADA: None. Their sole attack mode is dropping on the intended victim. There is no further damage after the first attack.

Proper staging and the creation of the right atmosphere is the key to running piercer encounters. Piercers should be used in quantity for encounters. The classic piercer attack is to have masses of the creatures dropping on the party as it runs through an area.

ADQ: What will a piercer do after the first attack?
ADA: Since it can inflict no further damage, a piercer will ignore the party and climb the nearest wall if its victim is still alive and circumstances permit.

ADQ: If a *Polymorph Self* spell is used to change to a creature capable of moving in the astral and ethereal planes (xorn, phase spider, Ki-rin, etc.), can the character then also use the appropriate "mode of locomotion" and go plane-traveling?
ADA: No. The *Polymorph Self* spell allows locomotion only within the plane in which it is cast.

ADQ: The psionic *Levitation* power has a duration of one turn/level of mastery. What is the time period involved?
ADA: Psionic *Levitation* can be used once per day.

ADQ: Can elves and gnomes have psionics?
ADA: Yes, psionics are possible for both these races.

ADQ: Do high constitution rangers get a bonus for both first level dice?
ADA: Yes. Constitution bonuses to hit points are a function of hit dice, not level.

ADQ: How do rangers acquire magic-user spells?
ADA: Just as magic-users do — they must be taught by higher level magic-users.

ADQ: Do rangers and paladins need material components for their spells?
ADA: Yes. Unless otherwise stated, spells cast by rangers and paladins require the same components as the corresponding magic-user, clerical, or druidic spells.

ADQ: The *Ring of Wizardry* doubles the number of first level spells that can be memorized. What if the magic-user has two rings? Are the first level spells tripled?
ADA: Yes. Each ring doubles the original spell capacity.

ADQ: What is the duration for the paralyzation ability of the *Rod of Lordly Might?*
ADA: Paralyzation from the rod lasts 1-4 turns.

ADQ: What damage does the giant slug's acid do?
ADA: The acid inflicts 4-32 hit points of damage.

ADQ: Is there a saving throw vs. giant slug acid? If so, what kind?
ADA: Yes. The victim is entitled to a saving throw vs. Breath.

ADQ: Can dwarves, gnomes, half-elves, half-orcs, or halflings become spectres?
ADA: Half-elves and half-orcs can; the others can't. Only human or part-human characters can become spectres.

ADQ: Does the *Fire Shield* return magical and strength bonuses, or just the base damage roll?
ADA: The applicable damage bonuses are included.

How do rangers acquire magic-user spells [in the AD&D® game]?

BOOT HILL®

Wild West Game

BHQ: Is there an encumberance limitation when buying weapons?
BHA: A pistol weighs about 4½ pounds; a rifle about 8-10 pounds; 50 rounds of ammunition about 2 pounds. A modern soldier carries about 50 pounds of gear. Cowboys should carry less than that. If your character can afford a weapon, he/she can own it.

BHQ: What's the difference between a SAR and a DAR, or a rifle and a carbine?
BHA: A SAR is a single-action revolver. A character must cock the hammer to revolve the cylinder and prepare the gun to fire. A DAR is a double-action revolver which is self-cocking when the trigger is pulled.

A rifle has a longer barrel and greater range, and holds more rounds of ammunition than a carbine.

DAWN PATROL™

Aerial Combat Game

DPQ: Can an plane coming out of a cloudbank tail another in that same turn?
DPA: No. An aircraft emerging from a cloudbank may not begin tailing until the next turn.

DPQ: My character was in a Sopwith Snipe that was badly shot up, and I knew he wasn't going to make it to the ground. I decided that my character should have his plane ram the enemy's plane. The rest of the group protested and voted against letting me do this. Who was right?
DPA: Intentional ramming was a rare occurence. This action would be consid-

ered an "atrocity" and looked down upon by all respectable airmen. It can logically be argued that any pilot would want to try to land his plane no matter how slim the chances were.

DPQ: I have a hard time believing some of the luck rolls other players claim they make. Sometimes I could swear that my character has hit a plane several times, but the other players still claim that their characters' plane is fine. Is there anything I can do to prove them wrong?

DPA: Not playing with them is the best idea, but if that's not a viable alternative for you, simply keep track of their hits and location. If they see you doing this it won't be long before you can be sure they are being honest in their record keeping.

GAMMA WORLD®

Science Fantasy Game

GWQ: Why are pure strain humans given so many benefits over other player characters?

GWA: After the game had been out for awhile, we noticed a trend; players were playing mostly humanoid mutants. Players were creating characters which took all of the advantages of a human body and added the powers of mutation. Further, we felt that the concept of pure strain humans surviving after the war years was a vital one. To encourage the playing of pure strain humans, they were given benefits which would add to the chances of their survival — and in the GAMMA WORLD game, characters can use all of the help they can get!

GWQ: Why can't characters increase in hit points like they do in every other role-playing game?

GWA: The GAMMA WORLD game concept deals with a savage environment which requires that all beings start out as tough as possible. This forces the player character to start out strong. The emphasis is on material and intellectual development, as opposed to physical development.

GWQ: How many spines can the Horl Choos throw in a given melee turn?

GWA: The plant can throw 1d8 at any single target and 1d4 at up to five targets in its thirty meter range. When the plant is faced with over five targets it will refuse to fire, not wanting to get destroyed in some type of stampede.

GWQ: Are the creatures and plants listed in the booklet edible?

GWA: If you can catch them and can kill them first, I think that you deserve to eat them. Just watch out for the many poison glands that most of them have in unusual parts of their bodies.

GWQ: I have a player character who died and was placed in a functional life chamber. She was brought back alive, but my referee tells me she has total amnesia and can't even speak the language. Is this the way a life chamber is supposed to work?

GWA: A function of the chamber is to strip away all of the technological knowledge of the character. The referee may determine that all knowledge has been taken away, but this seems a little extreme. On the other hand, your character has been granted life again. If the character was worth anything to begin with, you got a luck break.

GWQ: My mutated wolf character encountered and was killed by a general household robot. I don't believe these things are programmed to attack creatures. Am I wrong?

GWA: A general household robot could have a pest control program. It may have considered you a pest, and controlled you the best way it knew how.

Gangbusters™

1920s Adventure Game

GBQ: The price list does not give the price of a shotgun. How much is it?

GBA: A standard shotgun costs $75. As always, the GM may adjust this value to fit special circumstances if desired.

GBQ: The diagram for shotgun fire at the bottom of page 11 in the rulebook says that all targets take 10 points damage for ranges of 26′ - 75′, but the rules and charts state that targets only receive 5 hit points. Which is correct?

GBA: The diagram is correct. Targets should receive 10 points of damage.

GBQ: My grandfather was a military policeman during the 1920s and it sounds like a fun thing to try, but my referee won't let me play a character like that because it isn't standard to the game. Am I out of line for asking to play this type of character?

GBA: There are problems with setting up a character like this one. This character isn't just a glorified cop. There is rank to consider, as well as the fact that such a character would mainly be concerned with military and not civilian situations in Lakefront City. Although you could probably talk your referee into letting you play one of these types, it probably wouldn't be as much fun as you might think, because you would be constantly forced away from the action that everyone else is experiencing.

GBQ: My character fired a burst from a Thompson, and my referee said it hit a nearby friendly policeman. I say that my character could aim the burst towards the area I designated, but he says I couldn't.

GBA: The rules say ". . . If the dice roll indicates a hit, then all characters in the firing character's Field of Vision are hit." This means that the cop took one no matter how hard your character tried to direct it away.

STAR FRONTIERS™

Science-Fiction Game

SFQ: In the second paragraph of the section on "Administering Drugs" (page 16 of the Expanded Rules), it mentions 24 hours as the time limit after which a character whose stamina is at 0 or below cannot be revived. Shouldn't this be 20 hours as stated elsewhere in the section?

SFA: Yes. The time limit should be the standard 20 hours.

SFQ: On page 20 (Expanded Rules), it states: "For every tenth of a gravity (.1 G) less than 1.0 . . . the distance a character can leap and vault is increased 5 m." That seems rather large. Is this value correct?

SFA: No, the decimal point has been left out. The distance a character can leap and vault is increased .5 m for every .1 G less than 1.0.

SFQ: On page 34 of the Expanded Rules, it states that "MEDIUM movement is 16 to 75 meters/turn." Is this correct?

SFA: It should be 46 to 75 meters/turn.

SFQ: The Ranged Weapons Modifier Table on page 22 of the Expanded Rules and the text on page 32 disagree with what is printed on the centerfold and the Referee's Screen in reference to attackers and targets in vehicles.

SFA: All the correct information is in the book, but it isn't all in the same place. The correct modifiers are as follows:
Attacker in fast vehicle: -20
Attacker in slow vehicle: -10
Target in fast vehicle: -20
Target in slow vehicle: -10

SFQ: In the defense table on page 40 of the Expanded Rules, the power used up by the albedo screen is stated to be 1